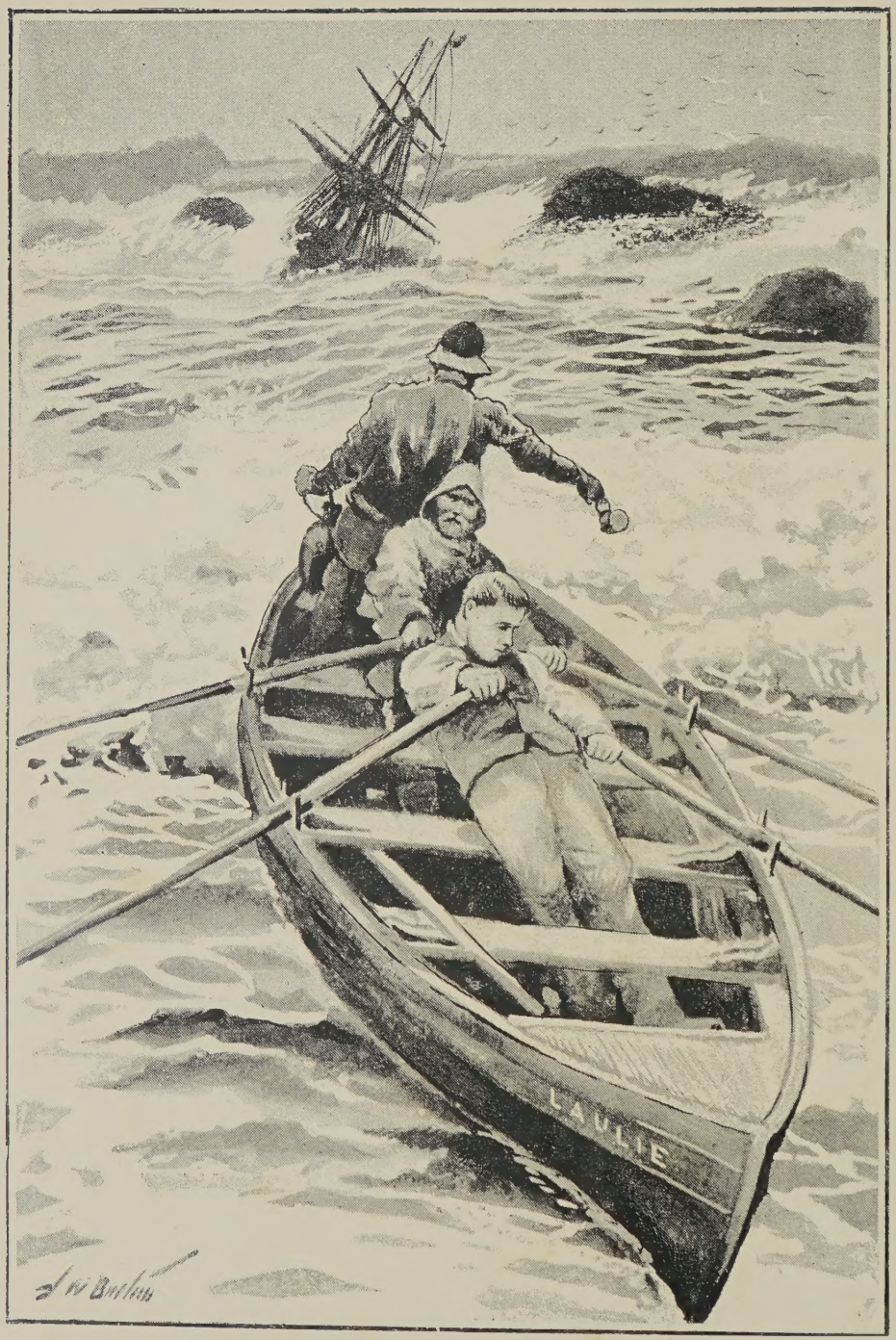
THE YARL'S YACHT

THE SCHOOLBOY SERIES



"Rolf stood in the bow throwing oil upon the surf with magical effect."—*Page* 40.

Frontispiece.]

THE YARL'S YACHT.

BY

J. M. E. SAXBY,

AUTHOR OF "THE LADS OF LUNDA," "THE SAGA BOOK OF LUNDA," "VIKING BOYS," "TOM AND HIS CROWS," ETC.

"To the great All-father's home
We are driving through the foam,
We are sailing to Valhalla
O'er the sea!"

London:
JAMES NISBET & CO., LIMITED
22 BERNERS STREET

Printed by BALLANTYNE, HANSON & Co.
At the Ballantyne Press, Edinburgh

Dedicated

TO

STEPHEN LINDÉMAN SAXBY.

My son, my blue-eyed sailor
  Who comes and goes at will:
Robust in soul and sinew,
  But tender-hearted still:
Who wears with careless courage
  His life upon the foam,
Who leaves his best affections
  Fast anchored in his home.

CONTENTS.

CHAP.		PAGE
I.	HALSENS AT HOME	1
II.	OLD FRIENDS	9
III.	AT THE WILL OF THE WINDS	18
IV.	HAAF-BOATS IN DANGER	26
V.	BETWEEN THE VODERS	35
VI.	THE LAIRD'S ARRANGEMENT	45
VII.	AN UNWELCOME VISITOR	53
VIII.	THE STRONG-MINDED BLUESTOCKING	62
IX.	AMONG THE HOLMES	72
X.	THE BROCH OF BURRA ISLE	84
XI.	FAIRY-RINGS	93
XII.	THE "TANGIE'S" ESCAPADE	104
XIII.	A BRAVE RESCUE	113
XIV.	TIME TO THINK, AND TIME TO PLAY	123
XV.	IN SEARCH OF ADVENTURES	135
XVI.	TREASURE-TROVE	145
XVII.	THE SHADOW THAT SUBDUES	158
XVIII.	CHEERS AND AMENS	168

CHAP.		PAGE
XIX.	UNDER WEIGH	178
XX.	STORMY DAYS	188
XXI.	THE YARL'S ERRAND	200
XXII.	VOER-TIME	210
XXIII.	TREASURES OF THE DEEP	220
XXIV.	FARÖE	230
XXV.	A VIKING'S VOYAGE	240
XXVI.	OLD ALLIES FROM HOLLAND	251
XXVII.	RATHER "MIXED"	261
XXVIII.	RUNNING RISKS	271
XXIX.	POOR LITTLE "TANGIE"	282

THE YARL'S YACHT.

CHAPTER I.

HALSENS AT HOME.

"HERE she comes at last, Trow! She is rounding the Ness: she will be here in twenty minutes: oh, I am glad!"

"Well done, the Yarl's yacht!" replied Trow lazily from among the daisies, where he was lying with his head upon a large dog and a book in his hand.

They made a pretty picture, Garth Halsen and Fram; the lad's soft goldie curls mixing with his dog's wavy black hair, the latter's nose resting upon his master's shoulder, Garth's fingers playing indolently with Fram's plumy tail, the eyes of both turning now to the book, now to Gerta Bruce.

The girl was standing on the top of a fell-dyke (turf wall) craning her neck to see over a point of high land running out into the bay, and hiding from her view a great portion of the beautiful expanse of water which wound among islets and gradually narrowed as it went inland until it became a river-like fiord.

She had been off and on that fell-dyke for some hours, and had been heard by the observant Garth to give utterance, in her impatience, to the heresy that "you can depend upon steamers being up to time, but these 'packets'—you never know when to expect *them*."

But now that Gerta saw the *Tangie's* white sails over Hovaness, and knew that she had come straight from the Isle of Lunda, the girl forgot to be captious, and could only exclaim—

"After all, she's just the nicest old tub afloat, and I'd rather go round the world in the *Tangie* than in the best steamer that ever was built. Look, Trow! oh, *do* get up and see how beautifully she is getting by Scarf-skerry. I must go and tell uncle she is coming. Now I wonder *where* the old man is to be found?"

Gerta had not far to go in search of the "Yarl," for he came out of the house that moment.

His impatience had been equal to her own—though for a different reason—and he had been up in what he called his Crow's-nest sweeping the sea with a telescope all the time the girl was hopping about the fell-dyke like a wheatear.

The "Yarl" had seen his little craft before Gerta did, for the Crow's-nest was a turret built among the ruined portions of his house, and stood on a knoll above the inhabited part of the building, so that the view from there was very extensive.

As soon as the old gentleman had satisfied himself that the *Tangie* was making fair progress, he had descended from his tower of observation, changed his

rough blue jacket for a decent coat, which he had an idea was more suited to his position as a landowner, and appeared before his niece and son all smiles.

He was not so old as he looked—this burly son of the rocks and their Viking breed—but his life had been one of toil and sorrow which had aged him before his time. An accident had made him slightly lame of a leg, but otherwise Hoskuld Halsen was hale and handsome, and not undeserving of the title which he boasted belonged to him of right, but which scoffing neighbours, more prosperous than he, bestowed more as a nickname than anything else. For the days had long long gone by when the Yarls of Broch were a power in the Shetland Isles, and Mr. Halsen had been obliged to earn a living after the most commonplace and distasteful manner.

He appeared at his front door at the moment Gerta took a flying leap from the wall; and extending his arms, she landed within them. At the same moment Garth and Fram rose to their feet and turned their faces to the bay, whereat Mr. Halsen remarked a little impatiently, "Oh, *you're* there, Garth; I scarcely expected you to be at hand in good time."

The old house of Broch was situated scarcely more than a stone's throw above the sea-marge. The grass, soft and green, sloped sharply to the low crags, where the water was deep enough to allow sixaerins to run alongside when even deeply laden; but there was a little quay among the rocks too. A short way along the shore there was a beach for curing fish, a store,

and the scattered cottages of the peasantry. The Yarl, like many other gentle-born, impecunious Shetlanders, had had to turn his hand to many humble modes of earning a living; but his want of business-habits, perseverance, and education had retarded his worldly advancement on every side.

Among other "schemes" he had invested in a sloop for trading, like others, between Lerwick and the more important localities throughout the islands, and he very soon came to believe there was not her match upon the seas, though his neighbours affirmed that she was a useless speculation, too small for a "packet," too large for the fishing—a commercial failure, in short.

Mr. Halsen put her on the run between Lunda and the metropolis, but, alas! a rival merchant, more 'cute than he, started a schooner, and the *Tangie's* trade was nowhere. Then her owner sent her to the Faroe cod-fishing, but that venture did not prove a success, and seldom did more than cover the expenses of the trip.

The time had not come for decked vessels to prosecute the Shetland haaf-fishing; and even if it had, I am afraid the Yarl's Conservative ideas would not have permitted him to allow his sloop to "enter" in place of the time-honoured sixaerins.

He would not, however, allow that she was a failure, so he continued to send her now and again to Faroe. More often she was employed for extra jobs, such as conveying a flock of sheep to Lerwick, or taking from thence some impatient person who wanted to reach

home by a less tedious process than sticking to the ordinary packet, and who could afford to pay for the hire of a vessel "all to himself."

When the *Tangie* was not so employed she was pottering about Burrawick, commanded by the Yarl himself, and "manned" by two or three boys from the hamlet, who greatly enjoyed the fun of the thing.

Mr. Halsen was a sailor by nature, and secretly took immense pleasure in going among the isles in his little vessel. The smallest excuse was enough to make him don his blue jacket, summon two or three laddies, and set off in the *Tangie*, wilfully blind to many home-duties demanding his presence. People who knew his position and resources knew that he was indulging in a luxury beyond his means when employing the sloop as a pleasure-boat. Thus there was some sarcasm in the name of "Yarl's yacht," but fortunately her owner could not see that, and certainly a good many people used the term with nothing but kindly respect; for, notwithstanding some peculiarities and many weaknesses, Mr. Halsen was a man much beloved by those who knew him most intimately.

On the whole Mr. Halsen took life easily, but there was one thing against which he fretted in secret very much, and that was the unfortunate lack of sympathy between himself and his only child. Yet Garth was a loving-hearted boy, and clung with demonstrative affection to those who understood him. But he was sensitive to a great degree, and delicate in constitution. He cared for none of the stirring amusements

in which his father found delight, and spent the greater part of his time wandering about the island with no companion but his dog and his book. His education was neglected, of course, and he was in danger of developing into a morbid, eccentric recluse when Gerta Bruce came to Burra Isle and woke the boy from his dreams.

It was wonderful what a change came over him in the companionship of a bright girl, trained to make Duty her watchword, and Love her law; and the Yarl began to question himself if the fault had all lain with poor Garth, when it became evident that the boy had only required the sunshine of sympathy to draw him out of himself.

"If this goes on," thought the Yarl, "it is possible he may take to the sea after all. I can't help thinking it *must* be in him. It seems so extraordinary that a boy of mine should not take to the water like a duck." But he could seldom coax Garth to go afloat unless for some specific purpose, such as a dredging expedition or a picnic.

Next to sailing the *Tangie* himself Mr. Halsen delighted to lend her to a friend, and on the occasion on which we make first acquaintance with Yarl and Yacht, she was returning from service done the Laird of Lunda, and she was bringing to Burra Isle those whom the master of Broch delighted to honour.

"She's coming along briskly," he remarked; "she has made a quick run if she left Blaesound at nine, as Mr. Garson said she would."

"Oh, she's a beauty, a duck, a dear!" cried Gerta. The little vessel was then tacking up the firth, and doing it well in the teeth of a stiff breeze. She had a difficult path to thread, for besides the holmes and skerries there were shallows abounding, and only a clever seaman (who knew the locality well, and also the vessel he steered) was competent to guide her safely to her anchorage.

The *Tangie's* skipper, for the time-being, was a man we have met before, none other than Yaspard Johnstone, who built the *Laulie* and many another good boat. He did not prosecute the fishing regularly, therefore was usually available for antrin (occasional, exceptional) jobs. His crew of one man and three boys we also know, for these were Rolf Soeder, Tom Holtum, Bill Mitchell, and Gloy Winwick.

When we last heard of the lads of Lunda, three of them were on the eve of departure for Edinburgh to begin there an University course.

The winter and spring had passed, and the youths had written saying when they should leave for home.

In the days of which I speak there was only one steamer which went to Shetland from Scotland, once a week. This vessel started from Leith on Friday morning, and usually reached Lerwick on Saturday evening. The passengers were obliged (unless their destination happened to be on what is known as the mainland) to remain some days in the town till the packets (trading sloops) started on their rounds. Then, if the winds were adverse, it sometimes hap-

pened that the passengers spent days, or even weeks, before reaching the particular island for which they were bound.

The impatience of Mrs. Garson (seconded, we may be sure, by the doctor's wife, and the little lady of the Manse) suggested sending a special boat to Lerwick to bring home the young travellers without delay; whereupon the Laird asked, and readily obtained, the use of our Yarl's yacht.

We can imagine the glee of Tom Holtum and Bill Mitchell when invited by Mr. Garson to act as part of the yacht's "scratch crew;" and a proud lad indeed was Gloy Winwick when appointed cabin-boy.

Lunda had been "horribly dull," these boys affirmed, during the absence of the three ruling spirits of all the fun, and their return for the holidays was hailed with the wildest joy by their companions of both sexes.

Well, the sloop had been to Lerwick to meet the steamer from Leith. She had gone back to Lunda with the young heroes, and was now returning to Burrawick carrying with her the whole party of lads by Mr. Halsen's invitation—without doubt by their own wish too; for Broch was a pleasant place to visit at all times, and just then it held a special attraction in the person of Gerta Bruce.

CHAPTER II.

OLD FRIENDS.

"THEY'RE all there, aren't they, uncle?" Gerta asked, when Mr. Halsen had taken out his spyglass again and levelled it on the *Tangie* for full five minutes.

"Ye-es, ye-e-as! I think so. Can't be sure. The young rascals fidget around one can't count them. That Bill Mitchell was born to be drowned! He's astride the bowsprit at this moment. Bless the boys! They are certainly all very abundantly alive at this moment!"

"Oh, I see Svein with my own eyes!" cried the girl, clapping her hands; "and there's Eric Mitchell longer of leg than ever, and Tom and Harry are standing by the companion arguing as usual, and—but—where's Fred? I don't see Fred. Uncle, is not Fred aboard?"

"Don't see him," said the Yarl shortly.

"Perhaps he is down below," Garth suggested, whereat his father snorted a contemptuous denial, and Gerta exclaimed—

"Oh dear no! Fred Garson isn't that sort at all."

"There go their hats," Garth said, and waved his own as the *Tangie* came smartly up to her anchorage, and the jubilant laddies on board of her, catching sight of the little group at Broch, bared their heads and shouted vociferously.

A boat was lying ready for the purpose at the Noost, and into it went Garth and his father, who soon rowed themselves alongside the yacht. Then pell-mell into the boat dropped the lads, and in less than no time they were standing around Gerta on the sward, each seeing who could talk most in the first minute. She had frankly and sweetly returned Eric Mitchell's salutation, but her face flushed and was turned a little aside when Svein, who had always been her chief chum, and who was her cousin besides, claimed his welcome. The other three, Tom Holtum and the younger Manse boys, she had seen quite lately, so received them with less feeling. As soon as she could get in a word edgeways, Gerta asked—

"Why is not Fred with you?"

"It's a confounded nuisance!" Tom exclaimed; and the Manse boys in chorus cried out, "Half the fun's out of everything lacking Fred."

Gerta looked to Svein, and he answered the inquiry in her eyes.

"Fred is always ready to do a kind action. We wrote to you about Langton—Ned Langton? He is as unlike Fred as can be—a quiet pious sort of chap, going to be a clergyman, awfully poor, with a widowed mother, and all that kind of thing, you know. Fred

and he are such chums at college, you never saw anything like it, and Fred asked Langton to come and spend the vacation in Lunda, which he was only too glad to do. But two days before we were to leave Edinburgh, what does Ned do but go and take measles, like a baby! and Fred wouldn't leave him. His mother could not come to the city to nurse him, and she was frightened about him, for he is delicate: so our Fred up and declares he'll stick by Ned till Ned is well enough to come to Shetland. Did you ever know the like?"

"Fred Garson is a brick!" said Garth; and Gerta added softly, "How good of Fred!"

"Well, well, my lads," remarked the Yarl then; "we must make the best of it, and be as jolly as we can without him."

"Hurrah! we'll elect the Yarl our king till Fred comes to resume his reign," shouted Bill.

"Long live the king! Long live the Yarl of Broch!" yelled Tom, and the others clamoured in chorus until Fram, thinking they had gone mad or forgotten the dignity belonging to mankind, put in his canine protest in a manner peculiarly his own. After barking excitedly for a moment, he began to fly round the group in circles, with his nose to the ground as if he were coursing—fast—fast—faster until the attention of all was fixed upon himself.

"Will that dog never learn sense?" Harry asked. "What does he mean by that fooling?"

"Fram, old boy, they don't understand you. Come

here!" said Garth; and the dog instantly came to his master's call.

Then Gerta, remembering her position as hostess, led the way to the house, where a bounteous picnic-sort-of-meal was waiting the visitors, whose voyage of some hours had given them a good appetite.

While his guests were eating Mr. Halsen laid before them his plans for the day, and the next day, and indeed for a week, if Eric had not stopped him by saying, "We promised mother we would return not later than to-morrow evening. You see we have not been many days at home yet, and if the *Tangie* had not chanced to be idle, should probably have had to put off our visit to Broch for another week."

"I daresay," muttered Svein, and looked at Gerta, who tossed her head and exclaimed, "Very kind that would have been, Eric!" and then Tom laughingly remarked, "A nice hot time we'd have had! Why, Svein has fidgeted so since he got home we haven't known what to do with him. If the *Tangie* had not brought him to Broch, he'd have set out swimming from Collaster to Burrawick—all for your sake, Miss Gerta."

"What a big goose you are, Tom Holtum," said Garth, and then blushed like a girl, while all the rest stared at him. His words were usually so gentle and few it was no wonder they stared, and the Yarl ejaculated, "What next, I wonder!" Then turning from his son, he said, "Well, boys, what do you say then to going

as I purposed for a *potter* among the holmes this afternoon?"

"First-rate; yes, to be sure," was the ready answer of the majority.

"Are you to be of the party, Ta?" Svein asked of Gerta in a whisper, and she shook her head, which caused him to make up his mind as to his own line of action.

"You don't care for pottering among holmes, Garth," he said, "and no more do I *to-day*. Suppose we stay and overhaul your specimens. Harry tells me you've got some fine ones since I left, and I think he and I would like a look at them soon."

A little more talk, and it was agreed that Svein, Garth, and Harry should remain at Broch, while the other three went with Mr. Halsen for a sail.

"We shall not be late, my dear," said the old gentleman, kissing his niece—"see that you do the honours in style till I return; and Garth, boy, don't go to sleep over a book of poetry. Look after your guests, my lad." And with these laughing orders delivered, the Yarl departed.

When the *Tangie* was once more under weigh, Garth led the way to his museum, as he called a queer tumble-down place adjoining his father's "Crow's nest," where he had stored a great number of most interesting specimens—botanical, geological, zoological, and all the other ologicals. Soon he and Harry Mitchell were deep in discussion over some exquisitely marked guillemot's eggs; and then it somehow hap-

pened that Gerta and Svein wandered to another part of the half-ruined old building, and began to talk of personal matters which had no connection with natural science.

"You can't think what a difference it makes at Collaster," said he. "The house isn't like itself without you. My birds haven't been looked after much, and Crawbie goes on croaking, 'Gerta! Gerta! where's Gerta, Svein?' till I could wring his neck."

"Poor old Crawbie! but you know you taught him to say that yourself, and I'm really glad he hasn't forgotten it."

"Yes, but hang it all! it sounds different now you are away. Now, look here, old lass. How long are you going to stay away, that's what I want to know?"

"I can't tell, Svein. It isn't—it isn't what *I* want; it's what is *right* for me to do;" and she lifted her expressive grey eyes to her cousin's face with a look that made him answer more quietly than he had meant to do.

"I can't well see how it should be *right* for you to stay here all by yourself—with no girl, or lady, I mean, near you."

"I'll tell you, Svein, and then you'll see. Auntie told me all about it."

"When did you begin to call Madre 'Auntie,' Miss?"

"I've copied it of Garth, I suppose."

"Be kind enough to copy your *other* cousins as aforetime, Miss Gerta Bruce."

There was a pause, then Gerta resumed. "I did not want to come to Broch—I loved so much to be at Collaster; but Madre said that I *owed* it to Uncle Hoskuld. She told me that he had loved my mother with all his heart, and my mother had been engaged to him for years. It nearly broke his heart when she changed her mind and married somebody else—worst of all his own half-brother. Oh, I think it is very very wicked of girls to do that. How *can* they change their minds when they've said they love somebody? Poor Uncle Hoskuld! He has always been very good to me, and there was nobody to come and be his little housekeeper when Aunt Betty died except—me! And, Svein, Madre said I could do him good, and that I could be of great use to Trow. He is so like a Trow, that boy Garth! He makes me laugh the way he goes mooning about with a book in his hand and Fram at his heels; and the way he glides round corners and appears when least expected is very Trowie indeed. But Madre told me how his education had been neglected, and how the lonely kind of life he leads made him peculiar, and she said she felt sure I could change all that. So I have. I can see a difference already; Garth is really trying to be like other boys."

"I don't see," grumbled Svein, "why you should be sacrificed for sake of making Garth like other folk."

"It isn't much of a sacrifice. I like Garth and uncle, though they are not like you and the doctor.

But, Svein, don't you see, it does seem to be my duty to stay at Broch?"

"The next point then is—for how long are you to stay?"

"Ah! that I can't tell. I never dare look ahead about it. I just try to be cheerful and make things pleasant for them, and leave the future to God."

"*I* dare look ahead, though," said Svein, "and the little lady of Collaster is not going to remain mistress of Broch all her days. I tell you"——

Further conversation was stopped by Harry calling out, "I say, Svein, do come here, man, and see this lovely starfish."

The cousins returned to the museum, rather reluctantly it must be said, and not in the least inclined to take Harry's chaff in good part.

"Where did you go?" Garth asked. "I thought you wanted to see the eggs, Svein."

"I expect," said Harry rather thoughtlessly, "that he was pitching into poor Gerta for what he styles her 'desertion.' He has been grumbling about it ever since he came home."

"Grumbling! what about?—about Gerta coming to *us*, do you mean?" Garth asked, the hot blood rushing to his face as the meaning of Harry's words, not at first apparent, dawned upon him. "Why, surely, oh surely, Svein, you don't call *that* 'desertion'?"

"I suppose I ought not to do so," Svein answered frankly; "but, you see, Gerta was my particular property, and one does not like to have one's property

confiscated in one's absence. You wouldn't have liked it yourself, Garth."

"That is true," said Garth slowly. "I had not thought how hard it must be to others, and perhaps to Gerta too."

"No! no! Trow," the girl impulsively exclaimed. "You know I love you and uncle dearly; and, Svein, it's a shame of you to vex Garth. You have Madre and the twins, and he has nobody but me."

"And Fram," added Harry, which raised a laugh, and the subject was dropped then.

CHAPTER III.

AT THE WILL OF THE WINDS.

LEAVING the young folks at Broch, we will follow the *Tangie* out the firth. When she got round the Ness, it was found that the breeze had increased considerably, so as to make "pottering" among the islets and rocks neither pleasant nor safe, therefore the sloop's head was turned seaward, and away she went on a free course "towards the open main."

The Yarl himself was at the helm, and his face beamed with delight as the docile little bark danced lightly over the waves as he willed.

"I could sail on and on like this for ever, I think," he said to Eric, standing near; but old Rolf, overhearing the words, remarked, "It's verra plaisant nae doobt upo the water at this time, but ye'll no' forget—wi' your will, sir—that we hae ta get back to Burrawick or nicht fa'."

Mr. Halsen laughed. "No, I won't forget, Rolf. I care less than most men to tack: straight ahead is *my* course. I don't mean to go far this afternoon, so we will turn about when we get the Voders in line due north, eh, Rolf?"

Burra Isle lies directly south of Lunda, so that the *Tangie* in making for the Voders had to pass to the right of the Ootskerries, Grunholm, and Havnholm—those happy hunting-grounds of our lads, who had much to say to each other about their former adventures in those localities, and Mr. Halsen listened sympathetically while they "fought their battles o'er again."

Anything more exhilarating cannot be imagined than that sail. The sea was bright and blue with crisp white foam-crests on its hurrying waves. The sky was clear and sunny, the wind steady and strong, the yacht trim and taut, the crew trusty, the passengers ready to be pleased by anything. Sea-birds hovering around and clamouring to each other gave life to the scene. Sometimes a big fish or porpoise took a somersault close by. On every side the graceful sails of fishing-boats gleamed above the rocking surf.

"They're making for hame," said Yaspard, as he watched the haaf-boats wing their way landwards.

"And wise they are," answered the Yarl. "There will be a gale before morning."

"I wadna say but ye're richt, sir," remarked Rolf, pulling his souwester over one eye, and peering from under the brim at the "weather." "It's like tae be a coorse nicht. The wind's been getting up a' day."

"I say, Rolf," Eric exclaimed suddenly, "what's that to eastward—south-east—almost on our course. Is it a ship, or what?"

All eyes turned as Eric indicated, and plainly dis-

cerned a dark hulk apparently drifting in the course of the *Tangie*. "Is it a steamer without smoke?" one asked. "A water-logged ship, perhaps," was the surmise of another. "A sick whale," suggested Bill. "A skerry gone adrift," remarked Tom.

The Yarl's glass was speedily brought to bear upon the strange object, and in a short time Mr. Halsen declared it to be a disabled vessel of some sort.

"Suppose we run down, lads, and speak her?" he said. "If there's anybody on board they must be in need of help; for, as far as I can make out, she hasn't much standing-gear left to help her along."

All cheerfully agreed to the proposal, and soon the *Tangie* was making for the vessel, which was evidently moving slowly, but more at the will of wind and tide than according to any intelligent guidance.

As they drew nearer our friends saw that she was not abandoned, and that some attempts had been made to repair rigging, &c. When near enough to communicate, Mr. Halsen hailed the stranger with the frank and friendly question, "Can we help you into port?"

Imagine his disgust at hearing a Yankee skipper shout back through his nose, "I guess you ain't going to make salvage off *me*. I've got a pilot on board, and if this darned old hulk will do the smallest thing she's bid, we'll get into port all right."

There was a haaf-boat towing astern which explained the pilot, and Mr. Halsen, highly affronted at the way in which his hospitable offer had been re-

ceived, called to Rolf, who was steering, "About, man! Let him drift to Davy Jones Locker if he likes! We must beat up for Burrawick now if we are to reach home before midnight."

Meanwhile Yaspard Johnstone had recognised on the deck of the American barque the crew of a Lunda haaf-boat, and had asked, "Can ye bring her in, think ye?"

"If we make the voe o' Collaster he may be thankful," answered the Shetland seaman; "but I hae me doobts. She's nigh unmanageable, and as like as no' may go by the mouth o' the voe."

"If she misses the mouth o' the voe she'll tak the Voders to a certainty," called Yaspard in warning tones. "Look tae yoursels, men. There's a gale coming forby. Tak my word for it, your haaf-boat is safer than yon foundering hulk!"

"Hang the surly beast!" exclaimed Tom Holtum, as the *Tangie* ran away south with her head well up in the wind, thereby promising to make the homeward journey not so very tedious after all.

"It would serve the Yankee right," said Bill, "if they did *not* make Collaster. He'll wish he had been more civil if he finds himself between the horns of the Voders."

"God forbid!" exclaimed Mr. Halsen. "They are a cruel three, those Brothers, and have been the fate of many a bonnie ship."

"I wonder how they got that name?" said Eric.

"My Garth could tell you. He picks up all the

old legends and romances about Shetland, and stores them in his mind. He's a queer boy," answered the Yarl.

"We'll ask him about the Voders," Eric determined, and he did so shortly after their return to Broch. The *Tangie* got safely and speedily back to her anchorage, and around the supper-table the young people exchanged experiences. When the "Yankee episode," as Bill called it, was recounted, Eric said, "And by the way, Garth, we want you to tell us how the Voders got their name?"

Garth's great blue eyes flashed like those of a Berserker. He looked as if a new soul had waked in him, and he exclaimed, "The Voders! oh yes, I know—I thought everybody knew. This was how it came about. There were three brothers who lived in the Pech's Castle by Whaalaire: three strong, angry Norsemen who hated all the world except themselves, and who were feared by everybody. You know there is no shelter for boat or ship at Whaalaire. It is a cruel bit of coast, with its rocks and skerries and sandbank. The brothers would light false fires on the shore, and ships seeking harbour would think these were the lights of Collaster. The mistake could not be known until too late; and so many and many a vessel struck on the three rocks lying in the way as if for that very purpose. The brothers were cunning in their plans, and people never could tell for certain, because no survivors of wreck on that coast ever came to shore. Dead bodies were found, often with wounds which neither rock nor

sea had made, but nobody could tell how these came by their death, only every one believed that murder as well as wrecking could be laid with truth to the charge of these three.

"They grew rich, and had lands, and serfs, and cattle, and boats, and were hated and feared more and more, till the whispered talk about them grew strong and fierce, and finally burst out in one awful deed of vengeance.

"A large ship had gone to spindlewood on the rocks, and human corpses lay ghastly along Whaalaire, while a little way above the beach the smouldering ashes of a peat fire indicated what had lured the poor ocean-wanderer to her fate. In the Pech's Castle the three brothers sat talking of the treasure they had secured, when in burst a number of men—their neighbours—armed and burning for revenge.

"The three were bound hand and foot, and carried in their own boat to the three rocks upon which so many ships had crashed. It was low tide. Each one of the prisoners was bound to a rock and left for the returning sea to swallow. Slowly came in the flow-tide again, and bit by bit it covered them over. Never a cry they gave, but men said they spoke to each other. One asked, 'Brother, dost thou still endure?' and another said, 'Brother, I would thou mightest be saved;' and the third spoke, 'Brothers, it is well we go together.'

"So the sea rolled in and covered them, and those rocks have been named The Voders since."

There was a moment's silence when Garth stopped. Then Tom Holtum exclaimed scoffingly, "And do you believe all that, Garth?"

"Oh, he believes it, and I don't see why we shouldn't too," Gerta exclaimed.

"It is just like what the old fellows used to do in the wild days lang syne," remarked Svein; and Harry added admiringly, "I wish I could tell a story as well as Garth does; but the plague with me is I always mix the legends in my mind. I never remember whether it was Sigurd or Saxie who conquered Bjorn, and I get into a hopeless muddle between the 'peerless Sir Galahad' and 'haut Prince Galahalt,' though I enjoy reading about them."

"I think it is a downright shame," said Eric Mitchell, "that fellows are not taught Norse Sagas as well as the Iliad, and all those old Greek and Roman poems. I am sure we Britons ought to be more interested in the deeds of Ragnar Lodbrok and Harald Klak, of Gorm, of Olaf Tryggvason, and Rognvald the Orkney Yarls, than in the wanderings of Æneas and the adventures of Ulysses."

"Right you are, my lad!" old Halsen exclaimed, and Garth looked at his father with delight. For once their sentiments were in unison, though the boy's enthusiastic devotion to northern lore proceeded from very different causes from those which prompted the Yarl to take pride in the story of Scandinavian prowess.

"I am sure," said Svein, "that I should have enjoyed above everything studying Norse history, and

learning the Norse language; and surely that would have been as useful—now that German is so much the tongue of science—as Greek. I do wonder teachers don't think of that."

"It is an insult to our forefathers," Harry sententiously declared, "a positive insult that we boys hear so little about *them* in school, and are crammed chokeful of those bumptious old Latins. Why, in spite of all their brag and bluster the Romans haven't left much mark on Briton. What's the good of marking us poor boys for not having Virgil and Horace at our finger ends? I never got the taws in my life about a Norseman. If I had I should know how to distinguish between Saxie and Sigurd, you bet!"

A chorus of yells greeted Harry's speech, and for an hour longer the talk was kept up with patriotic spirit; but at last the solemn old clock on the stair droning out the "midnight chimes" suggested bed.

After his guests retired the Yarl went up to his tower and looked anxiously out into the dim storm-swept sky.

"It is to be hoped," he muttered, "that the cranky fool and his cranky ship got into Collaster. If he didn't, there will be something more to hear about the Voders."

CHAPTER IV.

HAAF-BOATS IN DANGER.

"No fishing or picnicing, boys, this day," said the Yarl, as he joined his guests at the breakfast-table next morning. He wore his rough blue jacket, and looked as though he had been out in the wind, which blew shrill and strong though the atmosphere was clear and sunny. His face was grave, and in answer to Eric's "Any news, sir?" Mr. Halsen said, in a low voice, "The boats are not all in."

"They couldn't well make *Burrawick* last night," said reflecting and quick-brained Harry Mitchell; "the wind was dead against them. They would run for Lunda most likely, and gain Collaster before the tide turned."

"The tide was setting against that when we got home, lad," answered the Yarl. "The Burra Isle boats would never dream of going north among those skerries and shallows when the tide was turning, even with a fair wind."

"It was a howling tempest about midnight—I heard it," remarked Svein; then asked, "Is—anybody afraid about—the boats, uncle?"

"Look out the window, Svein."

The young people all turned to the windows, and required to ask no further question, for on the high bluff which formed an arm of the bay they saw groups of distracted women and children stationed, all looking towards the sea.

The waves were in a very turbulent condition, though much more quiet than during the night. The wind also had changed to another "airt." Those summer squalls get up very rapidly, and die down as quickly; but while their "dark" hour is upon them, pity the land-born who finds himself in their power!

The *Tangie* was riding safe at anchor, and one of the boys said, "I wonder if it would be any use sending the yacht out to look for them?"

"She could not go safely—at least not yet. But that's not a bad thought," answered Mr. Halsen, "and I'll see what I can do when the sea falls a bit more."

Just then some excitement among the poor people on Hovaness seemed to indicate that they saw something in the offing; and our lads, forgetful of warm scones, lovely poached eggs, and speckled trout half-demolished, set out to see for themselves what had caused the commotion. A quick run soon brought them to the higher cliffs where the scattered groups had collected, and from whence they plainly saw two gallant haaf-boats struggling with wind and wave to reach their desired haven.

"It's wir[1] men, *wir* men!" the women cried. "A' the rest cam hame upo the nicht—a' but yon twa. A' but they are safe at hame."

"Six men in each boat. Twelve of our best seamen. God preserve them!" ejaculated the Yarl, who had followed his guests and son. There were lines of white foam seething around every skerry, stretching from headland to headland, from isle to isle, and barring the way to harbours of refuge. It seemed an act of madness to attempt crossing those tideways, yet what help was there beyond? There was no turning back, no going aside. Death lay around; so on they came, those frail little skiffs, that looked like foam-flakes to be tossed anywhere at the will of the sea.

Again and again, as they dipped into a hollow of the waves, shrieks burst from the lips of the onlookers, for it seemed as though the boats were overwhelmed; and when they rose on a towering crest the wild "God be praised!" was as heartrending to hear as the cry of despair had been.

As the boats drew near Hovaness, and had to cross the eddying currents, which make that point a terror, a kind of awesome silence fell upon all, and not a word was breathed, while every eye was strained upon the boats. They came on under close-reefed sails, nearly abreast of each other, managed by skilful hands, prayed for by loving hearts. Some dangerous bits of water were safely passed. Then one mighty wave was seen

[1] Our.

to lift high the windward boat, sweep on, and in its fury break upon the other, and roll her over in a moment.

"God have mercy!" rang from the shore. "God save us!" was the cry of the perishing men.

"Sandy's ower!" exclaimed one of the fishermen in the first boat, and looking back, his companions saw the glancing keel and the hands clinging to it.

There was not an instant's hesitation then.

"Down wi' the sail and about wi' her!" called the skipper; and about she went, as quick as might be when such a "rig" has to be handled, and was soon flying back to the rescue.

Two of the men stood up, and crushing the livers of the fish they had caught, cast them on the sea, and this had a wonderful effect in preventing the waves from breaking.

It is difficult, nay impossible, to describe a rescue of the sort. The actors themselves can scarcely tell *how* they do the deed. Our friends on shore only saw the haaf-boat with oars out drift rapidly to where the capsized boat lay. They saw her boldly plunge amid the swirling waters, and rise unscathed upon their breast, which seemed quieted by divine power for the moment. Then with the rescued crew on board she turned once more to the firth, and ere long was scudding landwards in comparative safety.

"Are they all there? Do you think all are saved?'

Svein asked Mr. Halsen, and then a score of voices cried out, "Oh, sir! sir! are *a'* wir men there?"

"They are all there. Twelve in the boat, thank God!" answered the Yarl, putting his telescope in his pocket, and lifting the hat from his head with a reverent motion, which was imitated by not a few.

The folk hurried to meet the boat at the landing, and the fishers were plied with questions. Why had they not come sooner? what had caused the delay? and so on. The explanation was full of interest for Mr. Halsen and our lads. It turned out that the disabled barque had missed the voe of Collaster after all, but the change of tide had fortunately happened in time to save her from the Voders. She had been borne back to the fishing-ground where she had picked up her pilot, and where the *Tangie* had sighted her.

"And there she is, and there she's like tae be," said one of the men. "Her pilot when he saw what kind o' a night it was like ta be left her, but we stayed by as lang as we could. We asked the Yankees tae come wi' us, but they wadna leave their ship, so it's like she'll baffle[1] aboot among the isles till she strikes, and then the fules will wish they had put mair trust in a haaf-boat."

"It was very good of you fellows to lie by the obstinate idiots so long," remarked Mr. Halsen; "but that vessel seems to bear a charmed life, and may reach a port in safety yet. Let us hope so."

"She's more likely to grind upon the Ootskerries

[1] Struggle.

or Voders if she roams much longer over that bit of sea," said Svein.

"And she may yet be thankful to the Yarl's yacht for a helping hand," added Eric.

"We'll have a look for her, lads, this afternoon, if the weather will allow," exclaimed the Yarl. "We can take the old hulk on our way to Westervoe?"

"Then *must* you go back to-day?" Gerta asked.

"It isn't *must* but *mothers*," answered Svein. "However, we are coming again as soon as Fred and Langton arrive, and then we mean to carry you off till the end of the holidays."

"It would be nice, but"—and the girl shook her head; then catching sight of Garth's dejected expression,—for he had heard what was said,—she added, "No, Svein, my place is at Broch, and I am happy here."

The rest of the day was spent in roaming about Burra Isle, and playing pranks, for which boys never seem to lack time and zeal. The hunting expedition planned for them by Mr. Halsen was out of the question while the gale continued, but that did not prevent them from enjoying themselves, though frequently their longing eyes sought the *Tangie*, and not seldom they said, "What a nuisance, to be sure!"

"Won't we make a spanking run home though!" said Harry. "How I wish the *Laulie* were here. I don't think she'd leave much between her and the Yarl's yacht on the run, eh?"

"The Manse boys don't think small potatoes of their leetle boatie," laughed Tom; but Svein rebuked the good-humoured scoff by saying, "I haven't seen anything better than the *Laulie* yet, and when you, Tom, have seen as many boats as I have you will be in a position to pass judgment. There!"

"I am glad I shall not be with you this evening," remarked Garth; and Gerta laughing said, "He is no sailor. When was a Trow ever known to like blue sea? He has handed over all his ocean instincts to Fram, I think; that dog loves the water as if he had been born a seal."

The hope that they should fall in with "that Yankee," and have some adventures on the voyage to Lunda, did much to make the day pass merrily; and when Mr. Halsen announced his intention of returning with them, the lads were yet more delighted. So in high good spirits they embarked, and were speedily sailing out the firth followed by Gerta's longing gaze.

"Are you wishing yourself in the *Tangie?*" Garth asked as he stood by her side, and watched the girl's changing expression, in which some regret was obvious.

"Not exactly that," she answered with a little pensive smile; "but, Garth, I am like the cats. I have a feline passion for locality, and it is difficult for me, very difficult, to transplant myself."

"I quite understand," he said gently. "I have it strong myself. I don't think I could live out of

Burra Isle, and I ought not to have expected you could reconcile yourself to such a—a change. There is such a merry lot at Collaster, and no one here but father and myself."

"Never mind," Gerta replied cheerily. "You are a host in yourself, Trow; and I shall soon get over my bit of Heim-wein. Then we'll be quite as merry as they."

"I wonder," the boy asked, "if you have the least idea what a difference your coming here has made to me, and to father? No, I am sure you can't know —Gerta, it was all so lonely and sad. Things were so strangely managed in the house. Father came in so seldom. He spent hours and hours up in his Crow's-nest, or down on the shore with the fishermen, when he wasn't at sea. And—my mother never sat at meals with us. She had some curious fancies about it, and used to take her food in the kitchen. I don't think—my mother liked me much, and she did not care to see me reading, so I used to go out of doors a great deal, and I think I spent a lot of time at Mam Breata's cottage. I never heard any one say much about God and religion (except Mam Breata) until you came. And, Gerta, you have shown me how good it is to be *good*. It does help me so to hear you speak, as you always do, of holy things. Somehow heaven has grown real to me since you came. O Gerta! was it worth leaving Collaster to come and help me so?"

"Indeed it was, dear Garth; and I am as glad as I can be that I have been of such use to you."

"Does it make up in part?"

"Certainly, oh yes, indeed it does."

"Thank you, Gerta. I can't say all I feel, but you *know*."

CHAPTER V.

BETWEEN THE VODERS.

NOTHING was seen of the disabled barque on the voyage to Westervoe, but she was heard of there. When the *Tangie* arrived the first news that greeted the party was —"A ship has come upon the Voders, and it is feared all on board must perish, for the sea is still breaking so frightfully on the rocks there that no boat dare go near them."

The greater number of the fishers had retired to rest, quite tired out by their own experiences of the former day and night; but other men, and many of the women, of the nearer hamlets had sped to Whaalaire if haply assistance could be rendered from there. I think I mentioned that the coast on that side of Lunda is barbarous in the extreme, and has no shelter for boats anywhere for a couple of miles along the shore. The headlands on either side, with their numerous detached rocks, create at all times a considerable disturbance in the sea; and when a storm adds its power to theirs, Whaalaire is a place to be shunned by "everything that floats."

When it was known that a ship had driven on the

Voders, an attempt had been made to send boats from Collaster, but even Mr. Garson was forced to own that it was useless to try to reach the wreck, so all that could be done was to "stand by" on the nearest land, and hope that the ship would hold out till the sea grew calmer.

As soon as the Manse boys landed and heard the news, they were off like deerhounds over the hill by the shortest cut to the scene of excitement. The other lads would instantly have followed when the dingy returned to the sloop after setting the young Mitchells ashore near the Manse, but a few words from Mr. Halsen made them pause.

"The *Tangie* may be of use, and in that case we shall need some of you lads," he said; so they waited with what patience they could for the result of a confab among the men.

After a brief consultation with Yaspard and Rolf, Mr. Halsen decided to run round in the sloop, for without question *she* could be useful where haaf-boats were not. Before starting, however, the two men went on shore again, leaving the Yarl to curb the impatience of his young companions as best he could. When the dingy came back Rolf was in possession of some mysterious jars, procured at the store, which he carefully stowed aboard; and Yaspard, without asking leave of anybody, had taken the *Laulie* in tow. She was hitched astern of the sloop, and then away went the Yarl's yacht, towing the boat after her. Svein, on board, looking over the side, remarked that the

Manse boat never made such an undignified journey in her life.

"Maybe no," said Johnstone; "but there's no a boat to match her in the isle. She's as safe as the best o' gude lifeboats, and that sma' and canny, she'll gang safe where naught else will."

"What for," Gloy Winwick asked Rolf, "did ye bring yon jars o' oil aboard for. The smell o' them is enough to make a body sea-sick."

"Haud de tongue and use de een," answered the old man, with a good-humoured smile, and patting Gloy's head, which didn't at all please him. He considered himself too much of a man for such treatment, and he was inquisitive about the jars.

It had been past ten o'clock at night when the *Tangie* reached Westervoe, and it was early morning before she came round the Head of Collaster and Vega. We must remember, however, that there is scarcely any darkness during the midsummer nights of those regions, and it was quite daylight when the sloop lay off the Voders where the American vessel was clutched as in a vice between the rocks. Great broken waves were dashing against her: every blow they gave carried away or smashed something. Some of the men had been washed from her: a few still clung to the wreck, having managed to find precarious shelter on the lee side of the deck. The ship was lying over so that the waves breaking on the weather-side could not altogether sweep the deck.

"*We* can't possibly get near them," said Mr. Halsen

decidedly. "The sloop would go crash on the rocks like an egg-shell if she came within the draw of that sea."

"That's what I surmeezed, sir, afore we cam' this length," answered Yaspard. "A man has a better chance in a dingy than in a three-decker upo' a coast o' this kind. Na! Na! the *Tangie* canno' gang near the Voders at this time, but the Manse boat micht."

"Risky, very risky!" muttered the old gentleman; "yet—there are lives to save—must risk something for *that*, eh, men?"

"I'm willing, sir," said Yaspard.

"And I," "And I," promptly added Svein and Tom Holtum.

"And here's auld Rolf that never stood by idle when lives were in peril," exclaimed the fisherman.

Mr. Halsen nodded approvingly at the volunteers, then took careful observations on the situation.

There was not a fishing-station, or boat-noost, within the range of the rugged headlands on either side of Whaalaire—not a chance of any rescue coming from the shore, which was thronged with people right willing to aid, but helpless to save those on the wreck. If there had been any life-saving apparatus (such as ought to be within reach of *all* exposed parts of our coast), in Lunda efficient help could have been given, for the Voders lie close to the land. As things were, the sole chance of rescue was with the *Tangie;* and when she lay-to by those cruel "Brethren," a shout of joy rose from the land, for the people knew

who were on board of her, and they felt that Hope was there!

"Weel, sir, what do ye think?" Yaspard asked a little impatiently; and the Yarl answered, "Let us try it."

"No' *you,* sir, but we. Somebody must stick by the sloop, ye ken. I'll tak twa wi' me, and ye'll keep twa," Johnstone decided; and Mr. Halsen agreed.

"Boys, get the boat alongside if ye can," Rolf called out. "I've got something else tae see after."

The "something else" was those jars, which he carefully lowered into the *Laulie,* when, with much difficulty, she was hauled near.

The Yarl watched Rolf's action with much interest, and said, "I very much believe with you in *that,* Soeder."

"*That,* and the Lord's blessing, sir."

"Oh, I know *now* what it means," ejaculated Gloy. "I wonder I did no' think upon the richt reason afore."

The Holtums had understood it all the time, for every soul in Lunda had heard Rolf Soeder tell how the Laird had (when once at the far haaf with his favourite crew) brought the boat safe across the string o' the tide into Easterwick, through pouring out of oil on the troubled waters.

Our lads had also seen something of the same sort done by the Burra Isle men on the previous day, when they scattered the bruised livers of the fish upon the surf. The Shetland fishermen have been in the habit of resorting to a like expedient always, and

they understand, as perhaps no other living people do, the full significance of the old saying, that "the words of the Peacemaker are as oil on the troubled waters."

With some difficulty Yaspard, Rolf, and Svein got into the *Laulie;* and when she rowed out from the sloop, making straight for the Voders, Harry Mitchell on shore recognised her, and loud were the lamentations of the Manse boys that they were not of her crew. Bill, in particular, felt like a deserter, and said, "Now if I had not been in such a confounded hurry I'd have been one of them still—one of that prime scratch crew."

Yaspard had one pair of oars, Svein the other; Rolf stood in the bow throwing oil upon the surf with magical effect. The *Laulie* rose like a tystie upon the waves, and never shipped a cupful of water. All around her the breaking waves were calmed, and she actually managed to approach the Voders so near that a rope could be thrown to the seamen.

It was soon attached, and then began the work of rescue. One after another a number of men were drawn from the wreck and hauled into the boat, until she had received as many as she could safely carry.

These she conveyed to the *Tangie*, and repeating the perilous voyage twice, was the means of rescuing every survivor on the wreck.

The Voders are within a couple furlongs of the shore, and the people could easily see all that went on. Loud and long were the joyous shouts of those spectators when they marked the success attending

such a "venture," and some excitement was added when a land-lubber suggested that possibly the shipwrecked men would be brought ashore at once. "Not if I know the Yarl and Rolf Soeder," said Mr. Garson. And he was right, for when the *Laulie's* task was triumphantly accomplished, the *Tangie* "turned on her tracks" and made for the nearest harbour, whereupon the crowd on Whaalaire dispersed.

Dr. Holtum was one of the first to leave for Collaster as soon as it became manifest that the wise seamen had no intention of attempting to touch that surly strand. He was on the quay surrounded by the Manse boys when the *Laulie* brought to that safer landing-place the rescued Americans, and to the doctor's hospitable house they were taken at once, to be provided with all necessary creature comforts.

I will not attempt to describe what the father's feelings had been when it was known that his gallant Svein was one of the little rescue-party in the *Laulie;* but the welcome he received on arriving at Collaster showed the lad, even more than his own consciousness, how great had been the peril he had gone through.

Indeed, when it was all over, and Svein was resting on his mother's sofa, with his father's hand holding his in a close grip, he could not help shuddering at the thought of what he had come through, and his whole heart echoed the doctor's words, "Thank God, it is over, and *well* over."

"To think," Harry Mitchell exclaimed, looking envi-

ously at Svein, "to think that *our* boat did the job, and not one of *us* was in her. It is too provoking."

"You are welcome to my place next time, Harry," said Svein.

"I think," Eric remarked, "it was as great a trial to look on as it must have been to act. I know Dr. Holtum felt so."

"It was very painful," said the doctor.

Just then the Laird arrived, and going up to the Yankee Captain, said with his usual frank heartiness—"This is a bad job for you, Captain; but we must try and make your delay as agreeable as we can."

"Thankee, thankee! I've just been telling that fine old block on the sloop out there that this will be a lesson to me how I turn up my nose at a polite offer again. If I had not been a suspicious, darned old fool, that didn't have acquaintance with decent gentlemen, these poor men of mine hadn't have gone overboard."

Mr. Garson had heard what had taken place between the Yarl and the Yankee from the fisherman who had acted as pilot for a time, but his kindness of heart prevented him from referring to it.

"How did you get into such a mess?" he asked, changing the subject. "You must have been having a bad time for days."

"Been up the Baltic, and was making tracks for home when the storm caught us. The old ship wasn't good for much outside of fair weather and a

free course, so she caved in to the sea-devils, and we couldn't manage her one bit. But if your darned rocks had not come across her, I'd have been halfways over the Atlantic now."

"Talking of sea-devils," laughed Mr. Garson, "do you know it was one of that same breed that saved you?"

"Guess it was another kind of fish, squire!"

"No, nothing more than a sea-devil! Eh, doctor, am not I stating a fact?"

"After a fashion, yes," replied Dr. Holtum. Then, seeing that the American thought they were poking fun at him, the doctor explained briefly—

"Yon little sloop is called the *Tangie*, and that is the Shetland name for a sea-demon."

"I'm with you now, sir," answered the Yankee, nodding his head; "but the little craft should have a prettier name. She's no devil, you bet! And the old boy on board—well, I will say he's a gentleman, and a right good one too. And for these chaps with him —God bless them. That's all I've got to say. Your rocks, squire, may be a devil's trap; but your men and your boats are *'tother thing* altogether, no mistake about that."

There was a hearty laugh from all except the speaker, who saw nothing in his words to provoke mirth, and was as grave as possible, adding, when he could make himself heard—

"There's not many folks would have done what those chaps did—more especially when I had given

them a right smart slap in the face, day before. I guess this sort of thing is what the parsons call real slick-down Christianity; and it's a mighty good sort of thing, that wants being poured overboard all over the sea like that there oil. So there!"

CHAPTER VI.

THE LAIRD'S ARRANGEMENT.

THE Yarl was in no particular hurry to get back to Broch, so readily accepted Mr. Garson's invitation to dine at the Ha'. He seldom visited at the doctor's house, and we may in part understand the poor old man's feelings when we recall Gerta's conversation with Svein.

The doctor's wife was the sister of Gerta's mother, who had treated Hoskuld Halsen so cruelly, and Mrs. Holtum resembled his old sweetheart enough to make it painful for him to meet her often.

If he had known how much she understood his feelings and sympathised with him he would have acted differently; but the Yarl believed that nobody knew how much he had suffered. Shortly after the girl he loved married his half-brother Mr. Bruce, Hoskuld, in a fit of spleen, and to show the world how little he cared about that broken troth, took to wife the pretty, but ignorant and uncultured, daughter of a fisherman, who was never equal to the position he gave her, and was not regretted when she died.

But though she had never been his fitting help-meet, nor a judicious mother to his son, Betty had managed the housekeeping very well, and was missed for that.

After that uncongenial tie was severed, Mr. Halsen began to take himself to task for the manner in which he had performed some of Life's most important duties; but though we may often become alive to our failings, it is often a very difficult matter to overcome them when they have become the habits of a lifetime, and I must own that the Yarl found it next to impossible to amend the ways of his household without assistance from without.

Then he began to look about for some one who might be willing and able to come to his aid, and the first person he thought of was his niece Gerta. He had seen very little of the girl, but what he knew of her he liked. Moreover, he was—being her father's next-of-kin—her natural guardian, though he had never laid claim to the position. Then she was near Garth's age, and would be a delightful companion for him. The neglect of his son, which had gone near to ruining the boy's character, was a point which Mr. Halsen's wakened conscience kept well to the front; and I think he was studying Garth's well-being as much as his own wishes when proposing that his niece should come and make Broch her home.

"The doctor has girls of his own, and doesn't need Gerta," said he to himself; "and it should be more agreeable for her to be mistress of my house than

'nobody' in the family of her other uncle. Girls like to be number one."

It is none of our business to inquire further into the reasons which prompted Mr. Halsen to ask that Gerta Bruce should come and keep house for him; but I think we shall see that Gerta's aunt was moved by far finer ideas of duty than Gerta's mother had been when she agreed to let the girl go;—more than that; she had taught her niece to accept the position as a sacred mission. I think the kind response which his request had met softened the Yarl's heart—never hard or sour at any time—more than many sermons had done, and had paved the way to a better understanding of his cross and its consequences. Still, when he met the Laird in Dr. Holtum's drawing-room, and Mr. Garson asked him to go over to Blaesound, the Yarl was better pleased to do that than remain at Collaster, even though a chorus of dissent went up from the boys, who declared that it was a shame of their newly elected king to desert so soon.

"Oh, stop your noise, lads," called out the Laird. "Let the Yarl go with me; and if to-morrow you don't say his visit to the Ha' has been for your benefit, I'm a Dutchman!"

"Now I wonder what's up?" Bill whispered Tom.

"Something prime when the Laird's in it," was the reply.

And something prime it certainly was, as the lads all learned that evening when they had collected by the boat-noost, having seen the Laird and his

guest come riding to Collaster again. Surmising that a crew would be required to take the *Tangie* to Burra Isle, they hoped some of them would be chosen.

"What are you all doing here?" asked Mr. Garson, with a merry twinkle of the eyes, which belied the sharp tone with which he put the question.

"The Yarl will want men aboard," promptly said Tom Holtum (who, his companions averred, had cheek for anything at all times).

"We thought," added Harry Mitchell more modestly, "that Mr. Halsen would let us take him home. We could have the *Laulie* in tow, and return in her, sir."

"And that's how you fellows settle folks' affairs for them, eh? Well, my lads, I've got quite another scheme, and one which the Yarl approves. Shall we tell them *now*, Halsen?"

"By all means," replied the Yarl.

"Well," the Laird resumed, "I had half a mind to wait till Fred comes before telling you; but that's scarcely fair to Eric and Svein, who have deserved reward as much as he, and ought to have it without delay. My lads" (turning to the two "'varsity men"), "I can't tell you with what exceeding pleasure and pride the minister, doctor, and myself have received news of your progress, perseverance, and good conduct during your first session at college, and amid the distractions of city life. One of you—Svein, my boy, I congratulate you with all my heart—has taken the highest honours. The other—good luck to

you, Eric—brought his mother a gold medal to hang about her neck. My Fred's brains haven't done so much; but his absence at this moment proves that his heart is as true and tender as yours, and I am not less proud of my son's unselfish action than I am of your talents."

The young fellows had listened in respectful silence so far, but it was not in boy-nature to restrain their tongues any longer, and a vociferous "Hurray! Hurray for Fred!" broke in upon Mr. Garson's speech, and it was some time before he could make himself heard further—not indeed till Svein called out severely—

"Oh, shut up, will you; and let's hear what the Laird's got to say. Stop it now, or I'll"——

What he meant to say further I do not know, for they did stop, and Mr. Garson resumed.

"I know you Manse boys think all the world of your boat, and I am with you there. She's a fine boat. Fred has some conceit too about his *Mermaid,* and the doctor's whilly is not to be despised by any means. But we all allow that the Yarl's yacht beats them hollow, as a means of getting about and enjoying the sea. There's dignity, as well as comfort, about a decked vessel which even the *Laulie's* crew will admit. There's safety, as well as scope for adventure, with a 20-ton sloop, which the best fourareen at your command can't give. Now, by the kindness of Mr. Halsen, I am enabled to offer, for your use during the long vacation, the Yarl's yacht. She is to be entirely at your service, with only one

condition, and that is, you must retain Rolf Soeder on board to act as pilot and general referee. All other matters, the appointing of captain, officers, and crew, voyages, victualling, and so forth, you will settle among yourselves when Fred arrives. For all expenses you will draw upon me; and my son knows I will not grudge *any* sums you may require for innocent amusement."

For full ten minutes after the Laird came to a conclusion the lads went entirely mad with joy. They shouted, and stamped, and shook hands all round, and were quite beside themselves; while the two gentlemen stood by laughing, but with hearts young and sympathetic enough to enter fully into that extravagant exhibition of feeling.

At last they calmed down enough to express their grateful thanks in plain earnest words, and then they listened while Mr. Garson gave some directions.

"The *Tangie*," he said, "is still commanded by her owner, and will not be handed over to you until you have landed him safe at Broch. But you won't require to tow the *Laulie* there. Rolf and Yaspard are aboard; so, I think, is Gloy (who, I suppose, will be retained as cabin-boy). Therefore not more than one or two of you need go with the Yarl. Mrs. Mitchell and Mrs. Holtum have seen precious little of their 'heroes' as yet, so I should suggest that Eric and Svein allow the younger boys to escort you home, Halsen. Eh, lads?"

This was agreed to; and after a cordial shaking

of hands between the Laird and the Yarl, the boat put off for the yacht, which was soon under weigh.

Mr. Garson rode home with a happy heart, for he had that day done a double kindness; he had not only rewarded the boys in the most generous and unexpected manner; but, in hiring the yacht on very liberal terms, he had gratified poor old Halsen's feelings in the highest degree, and relieved his mind of a heavy pecuniary difficulty.

Before setting out for the Ha', Mr. Garson offered Eric the pony upon which Mr. Halsen had come back to Collaster; therefore, when the party on the shore separated, Eric rode swiftly over the hill to Westervoe, eager to tell his parents all that had taken place.

At the same time Svein hastened home with the same story, to which his father listened with interest, and did not lessen his boy's pleasure in the recital by letting him know that the Laird had consulted the home-authorities of Collaster and Westervoe before making his proposal to the Yarl.

The *Tangie* took some time to reach Burra Isle, for the wind and tide were adverse; but when the Yarl landed at last below his own house, Gerta, Garth, and Fram were waiting on the crags to receive him. Harry and Tom were the crew of the yacht's dingy, and they did not linger longer than to land Mr Halsen and tell Gerta the grand news.

"Oh, how pleased Fred will be!" she exclaimed. "He has always so longed for a yacht. *He* will be captain, of course? And you will come often, often.

to Broch? You know it has always been because your boats weren't convenient—too small and all that—that you have so seldom come to Burra Isle, or indeed to any of the larger islands. But now you will be cruising all over the place—everywhere! and I shall see you often."

"When do you suppose Fred will come?" Garth asked.

"Eric thinks Langton should be well enough to travel a fortnight hence," said Harry. "We shall be busy getting things ship-shape in the *Tangie*, and learning how to work her. Then we'll go to Lerwick for Fred and his chum, and then, and then, whoop!"

"Everybody must come to Broch for a gigantic picnic as soon as Fred arrives—mustn't they, uncle?" said Gerta.

"Yes, my dear—yes, by all means. Invite whom you please. You hear, boys! Take Gerta's invitation back to Lunda, and say I told you. Bring them *all* from the Manse, and the Ha', and Collaster; and we'll have a regular good picnic after the old fashion, with Gerta for Queen of the feast."

"All right, sir, we'll not forget;" and bidding a hasty and hearty good-bye, Tom and Harry returned to the dingy, which was soon aboard, and the *Tangie* once more on the wing.

CHAPTER VII.

AN UNWELCOME VISITOR.

A FORTNIGHT later Isobel Garson was standing beside her mother's chair with pouting lips and frowning brow; while the Laird, leaning against the mantelpiece, was smiling at his young daughter's annoyance.

The weekly mail from Scotland had arrived a few minutes before, and the open letters on Mrs. Garson's lap held the secret of Isobel's downcast looks.

"It is really too aggravating, mother," she muttered. "*This* week of all weeks in the world for such a visitor to arrive."

"My dear child, we must make the best of it. You know there are no lodgings to be had fit for a lady in Lunda, and we *must* invite her to stay here: though I confess I am as frightened as you are annoyed at the prospect of having to entertain a strong-minded female tourist."

"For the honour of the Old Rock, my dears," the Laird struck in, "you must suppress all unpleasant emotions, and receive the stranger with fitting hospitality. I should not wonder if Fred—finding his fellow-passenger in the steamer had introductions to

us—has offered her a passage to Lunda in the *Tangie*, so we may expect this Miss Congreve along with our lads."

"Oh, of course," Isobel exclaimed, tossing her head, "a woman of her sort would instantly choose the Yarl's yacht rather than the ordinary packet, without taking into consideration the fact that there was no other lady on board. Strong-minded women on the rampage never mind what they do."

"As Miss Congreve is probably middle-aged, and has been (Lady Grove tells me) a great traveller, there would be no occasion for her to consider points which *you* would have to remember," said Mrs. Garson gently; and her husband added—"It would be only proper courtesy on Fred's part to bring her with his party; and really now, Isobel, you must try and make the best of it. I quite sympathise with you in your disappointment at the thought of a stranger being here just when we are having our family reunion, but it can't be helped, and after all she mayn't be so formidable as you imagine."

"Nor will this Miss Congreve be the only stranger, remember," said the mother. "You know we have never seen young Langton either."

"That's quite different, mother. Ned Langton is Fred's friend, and we do know him well from Fred's letters. But now, what on earth am I to say to Gerta? She has fixed the day after to-morrow for the grand picnic—the gathering of the clans! She says in her letter to me, 'How delightful it will be to have

all my *old friends* here!' There will be no excuse for leaving this creature behind; and Gerta's whole fun will be spoilt, for she dislikes strangers so much, and will feel quite uncomfortable having to play hostess to an English touring woman—what a very unpleasant person she *must* be!"

"Don't cut-and-dry everything, my child," said the Laird, laying a caressing hand on Isobel's hair. "I have no doubt your mother will contrive that our visitor shall not be a trouble to Gerta—if it turn out that Miss Congreve will care to accompany our party to Burra Isle."

"Oh, she'll care—of course she'll care to go," said Isobel less petulantly, and with a humorous smile twitching the corners of her mouth as the ridiculous part of it all appeared more forcibly before her. "She has come to Shetland for the express purpose of seeing all there is to see; she means to 'do' the islands, and she will."

"There's a boat going to Burrawick just now," Mr. Garson remarked. "Perhaps you should send Gerta a note warning her of what may be."

Accordingly Isobel sat down, and hastily indited the following note to Gerta Bruce:—

"MY OWN DEAR GERTA,—The post has just come, and we have a letter from Fred telling of his safe arrival, with poor Ned Langton, at Lerwick. We expect the *Tangie* here this afternoon. But now I must tell you a little disagreeable matter.

"Mother's old friend Lady Grove has given a horrid, strong-minded, touring wretch an introduction to us. She would be in the steamer with Fred, and will in all probability come north with our boys instead of by the packet. She will be staying at the Ha', and we shall have to lug her about with us on all our excursions. Isn't it truly horrible?

"Mother thinks I must beg you to allow us to bring this hideous Miss Congreve with us to Broch on Thursday. We will try, dear Gerta, and keep her from being a nuisance to you. Lady Grove says she is 'addicted to natural science pursuits:' so I am hoping Garth will take her in hand. I feel as if a shower-bath had come down upon me, and half my pleasure in Fred's return is spoilt. However, as father says, we must make the best of a bad job. I know you would rather we brought the Horror with us than that any of us remained behind to entertain her. But please send back a note about it, because we'd like to hear what the Yarl says on the subject.—Your loving ISOBEL."

Shortly after that note was dispatched, and Isobel had recovered her good temper by a gallop over the hills on her pet pony, the *Tangie* appeared in Blaesound, and all who loved him were rejoicing over the return to Lunda of the Laird's only son.

In the excitement of receiving Fred and his friend Miss Congreve was forgotten; but in a moment Isobel remembered, and clapping her hands, exclaimed—

"Oh, joy! the strong-minded female has preferred to come by packet after all!"

Her brother stared—so indeed did all present; whereupon Miss Isobel had to explain herself.

"But," said Fred, "we never got a chance to offer the lady a passage. She may have been on the steamer, probably was, but she did not make herself known to us—wouldn't know who I was, of course."

"There certainly *was* a person on board," added Ned, "who might be the lady Miss Garson means. I took careful note of her. She wore blue spectacles, grey ringlets, and a mushroom hat tied down with a green ribbon. She was studying Balfour's Botany book."

"That's Miss Congreve for certain," exclaimed Isobel.

"Well, we've got respite for one day, for the packet won't arrive till to-morrow evening."

But when the regular trading sloop did arrive, no Miss Congreve put in an appearance, and it was concluded that she had remained in Lerwick, meaning to make a slower and more thorough progress through the islands than was possible if she had embarked in the packet, which made short stay at its ports of call.

"I do call this the reward of virtue," said Isobel, when it was clear that the expected visitor had not arrived in Lunda. "Just think! That little angel Gerta writes back that she will be quite delighted to see *any one* we care to bring, and that it won't matter

if we do bring a stranger, because she has also got visitors from the south."

"Oh, bother!" muttered Svein, who was present; "now who on earth has dropped upon Burra Isle?"

"Gerta says it is an old gentleman and his daughter. Really those Cockneys get worse and worse! They come in ever-increasing hordes;" and Isobel tossed her head and flung out both hands as if she wished she could sweep the touring fraternity into the North Sea!

"The steamer was cramful, I tell you," said Fred; "but the majority meant to come no further than Lerwick. The rest will filter through the isles, and reach Lunda in due course; but really some of them were not half bad—were they, Ned?"

"I liked our fellow-passengers as a whole very much," answered Langton. "Perhaps the lady and gentleman who are at Broch now are the couple we liked—you remember, Fred, the clever old scientist who sat opposite us at table with the pretty daughter who had such a sweet voice."

"That wouldn't be so bad," said Fred; and Isobel was gracious enough to remark—"Oh, we shan't mind a pretty young lady and a harmless old gentleman; but strong-minded women, and men in big checked suits—ugh!"

"Are you not rather hard upon the professional tourist, Miss Garson?" Ned asked gently. "It seems a bit cruel of you to wish to keep your islands to yourselves, or such people as please your fancy. You know it is really possible for a strong-minded spinster

to have a kindly nature, and I *have* known men who affected tweed in large-squared patterns, with generous hearts and very unselfish dispositions."

Isobel blushed, but took the mild reproof in good part. They were all quite at home with Langton by that time, and he had such quiet gentle ways that no one ever dreamed of resenting the little speeches he sometimes made in what he considered a good cause. He was never forward or dictatorial in what he said, but his sense of justice was as strong as the instinct which prompted him always to speak a kind word for any person who was being "sat upon," and that just and generous spirit opened his lips on occasions when most people would have been silent.

Although Isobel Garson was neither so just nor so lenient as Ned, she always fully appreciated these leading features in his character, and allowed herself to be influenced by them. It does not take long to cement friendships between young folks in country houses when the days are long and the skies sunny, and very soon the lads of Lunda made the stranger one of themselves, which was a mutual benefit, we may be sure.

When *the* picnic party was being arranged, it was found that all the members of the three families could not go. The doctor had patients to look after, and his wife always excused herself from visiting Broch, feeling that her presence there might be a pain to the Yarl. Mrs. Garson generally contrived to evade going afloat, and was glad that a slight cold prevented

her on the present occasion. The minister was required to attend a meeting of Session, so he also was "out of it."

But all the young people were to the fore; Mrs. Mitchell pleasantly agreed to chaperon them, and the Laird—as was his wont—entered into the expedition heart and soul; so that there was, after all, not much disappointment when arrangements were concluded and the party made up. Everybody was in high spirits and good temper, and even Isobel was amiable enough to say—"Well, it's a pity, after all, that Miss Congreve didn't turn up, for this is sure to be a first-rate excursion, and Gerta is quite prepared to receive her, and be civil."

"The lady could not have had a better opportunity for seeing some of our finest scenery," said the Laird, "as I understand Mr. Halsen proposes that we shall spend a great part of the time cruising among the Holmes of Burra—are your instructions to that effect, Admiral?" he asked, addressing Fred, who had been duly installed as commander of the *Tangie*.

"I only got a message from the Yarl asking if I would allow the yacht to be at his orders for two days, and I sent back to say that our fleet of men and vessels was at his service." And Fred laughed.

"I say," Isobel exclaimed, "wouldn't it be good fun for one of you to dress up and be introduced at Broch as the strong-minded lady."

"Splendid!" cried one. "Yes, yes, what fun!" shouted another. "Let's consult mother," Eric sug-

gested; so Mrs. Mitchell was waited upon, and after some discussion agreed that Harry should be rigged in riding-habit, blue spectacles, ringlets, &c., and personate the absent Miss Congreve as she appeared to the wild imaginations of our young people. Mrs. Garson, practical and to the point, asked, "How are you going to explain Harry's absence?"

"Oh, don't be alarmed, ma mere," Fred answered; "we are not going to tell any whoppers. Everybody shall know that it is a piece of acting. Knowing that it is Harry and not Miss Congreve will not spoil our fun in the least, for he does the character to perfection, you know."

"I know Harry imitates a peculiar kind of old maid very effectively, but I am not sure that his notion of a strong-minded blue-stocking would be a correct representation of Miss Congreve. However, I shake my hands of you and your masquerading. I give both to Mrs. Mitchell. *She* is usually your theatrical manageress, and will watch over your mad pranks as she thinks best." And laughing, Mrs. Garson so dismissed the boys and girls.

The disguise intended for Harry was conveyed to the *Tangie* with numerous rugs, shawls, and baskets of provisions, and early on Thursday morning the yacht spread her white wings and ran merrily out of Blaesound, carrying as happy a crew of frolicsome young folks as ever set out to "make a day of it."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE STRONG-MINDED BLUE-STOCKING.

WHEN the *Tangie* cast anchor in Burrawick, she was met by Mr. Halsen in his own little boat, which took the party on shore in relays, except Fred and Svein, who preferred to start before every one else in the yacht's dingy. They were therefore the first to land, and Gerta was waiting on the shore to greet them.

"We've brought a Miss Congreve with us; I hope you don't mind?" was Fred's first words: to which Gerta answered with a prolonged and perplexed "Oh-h!"

"Don't be scared, Ta," said Svein. "It is only Harry Mitchell dressed up."

Then Fred added—"Isobel thought you would be disappointed after all that the expected Horror had not come, so we determined you *should* have her to entertain. Harry's make-up is perfect, and his simpering will put you into fits. We've modelled him after Miss Congreve herself."

"Indeed! Then you've seen her?"

"We saw a person in the steamer that must have been Miss Congreve, and no one else. Ned took

careful observations, and here comes her identical image."

At that moment Harry was being ceremoniously helped from the boat by two of his chums, and everybody was laughing at his affected little screeches and mincing steps. Gerta of course entered into the fun at once, and going up to the pretended Miss Congreve gave her graceful welcome to Broch.

"I thank you, young lady," said Harry, acting his part well; "but—pardon me—is there not a matron attached to this establishment? You are very youthful to be doing the honours of an Earl's Borough."

"Our island usages differ from those of civilised England, Miss Congreve," Gerta promptly returned. "But I am glad to tell you that you will find our party not all foreigners. We have two guests from your own land."

"Gracious, Gerta!" Harry exclaimed in his own natural voice, and on behalf of himself, "I forgot how ridiculous this will seem to those people. You'll have to explain, you know, ere I appear before them."

"Yes, of course; and they will enjoy it as much as we do, for they are very pleasant people, and quite at home with us already."

"Where are they, Gerta?" the Yarl asked; and a meaning, mirthful glance was exchanged between uncle and niece as she replied—

"Our guests are with Garth in his museum. Please take Mrs. Mitchell and the rest to the

drawing-room, and I'll go and tell Amy that they've come." And away darted Gerta, leaving Mr. Halsen to lead his guests indoors.

"Who's 'Amy,' I wonder?" Isobel said in a whisper to the Holtum girls, who, however, could only answer by a shake of their twin heads.

Mr. Halsen heard the question, and smiled; then hastily proceeded to lay before the lads his programme for the day while they emptied jugs of milk, and the ladies sipped refreshing cups of tea that had been waiting their arrival.

Gerta was absent some minutes—longer indeed than her impatient chums liked, but they consoled themselves by "drawing out" Miss Congreve meanwhile.

When the young hostess returned at last she was accompanied by a pretty, bright-faced girl of her own age, and followed by a peculiar-looking man and Garth.

"Our fellow-travellers sure enough," Ned whispered to Fred.

"This is Mrs. Mitchell, Amy," said Gerta, leading her companion forward. Then the Yarl, in his bluff way, introduced the roomful to the scientist by saying, "Here are all our young friends, sir. You'll get to know them individually before long—there are no two alike, unless it may be Kate and Nye. And *this* is Mrs. Mitchell, the sweetest mother and chaperon on the face of the earth; and *this* is the Laird of Lunda, my good friend. You've met Admiral Fred and his

private chaplain, young Langton, already. And this person—this guy, I might call it—is one of Mrs. Mitchell's boys representing a certain strong-minded, ugly old maid named Miss Congreve, who was to have been of the party, but failed to put in an appearance."

"Ah, very good! capital!" exclaimed the gentleman, rubbing his hands and bowing to Harry, who curtsied and simpered according to character.

"I think you travelled to Lerwick with us, Madame," the scientist said, evidently enjoying the joke quite as much as anybody, and determined to keep it up. "I recognise portions of your costume. That mushroom hat, for instance, struck me as being such a capital form of head-gear for travelling purposes. Amy, my dear, I hope you will take a hint from Miss Congreve's sensible ideas regarding travelling dress."

"I shall be delighted to give the young lady patterns," replied Harry, "and I am gratified at making your acquaintance. May I ask what is your opinion of this strange country?"

"I am not so clever as the ordinary tourist," answered the gentleman, smiling; "and I cannot say what Shetland has been, is, and will be, upon a three days' acquaintance. But as far as I have seen, it is a delightful place."

"Don't you think a few railroads would be an advantage? A 'bus on every island would be a great convenience, and there is great need of gas and pavements. I shall write a book on the islands, of course.

I am taking notes now, and I have entered some suggestions in my commonplace book regarding the establishment of Fire Insurance offices and a manufactory for turning out bricks."

Thus the "strong-minded lady;" and Mr. Halsen, taking up the chaff, answered—"I am afraid, Madame, when you have studied our country a little you will find we are scarcely advanced enough for these things."

Then everybody burst into laughter; and Isobel exclaimed—"Well, we have got fun out of Miss Congreve, after all!"

"Poor thing," said Ned, "her ears ought to be tingling."

Gerta glanced furtively at her new friend, who smiled mysteriously, and put a soft hand up to the side of her face,—an action which must have brought suspicion on her if any one besides Gerta had observed it.

But, by that time, some of the party were growing a little impatient for the start off, so preparations for once more embarking were made without further delay.

The lads rushed pell-mell to get the boats ready—all of them except Harry and Garth, who strolled slowly to the crags comparing notes about birds' eggs, and forgetful for the time being of the mushroom hat and grey curls. Fram walked solemnly by his master, casting suspicious looks at Harry betimes. The dog had not associated with boys of frolicsome nature, and

could not appreciate the kind of fun in which those Lunda young folks delighted. Fram considered "dressing up" to be an undignified and distinctly dangerous practice, likely to lead to grave error, quite beneath the notice of a respectable dog, and not to be encouraged in the least. He had his own ideas of what constitutes fun, and—as we have seen—Harry Mitchell looked down upon Fram's notions quite as much as Fram looked down on Harry's. So these two walked to the shore, one on either side of Garth, but caring not in the least for each other, and ready to echo the sage words of the philosopher who says—

"The friends of my friends are no friends of mine."

Mrs. Mitchell followed these with Gerta and the stranger young lady, while Mr. Garson and the scientist brought up the rear. Isobel and the twins had taken possession of Mr. Halsen, and had hauled him away—a willing captive—in the wake of Captain Fred and his crew. "We must seem a wild and unconventional people to you," said Mrs. Mitchell, addressing the stranger.

"And we city-bred creatures must seem very tame and commonplace to you," was the merry answer, at which the elder lady laughed.

Then turning to Gerta, she remarked—"I did not hear your friend's name, my dear; and though she makes me feel at home with her, I don't feel at liberty to address her as you do."

"Oh yes, call me 'Amy!'" the girl exclaimed.

"I feel as if Gerta and I were old friends; I seem to belong to Broch already. It is like a fairyland to me."

Just then a loud laugh from Mr. Garson, in the rear, caused the ladies to look back. Evidently the two gentlemen were enjoying some very lively joke; and Amy asked—"What is amusing you so much, father?"

"*The* joke, the joke, my dear. Tell it to Mrs. Mitchell, and let her share the fun."

"Hush! the boys will hear you!" Gerta said; but the boys heard nothing. So Amy, turning to the perplexed Mrs. Mitchell, whispered—

"*I'm* Miss Congreve. Isn't it fun? When Gerta came to the Museum and told us how the young gentlemen had dressed up a sham Miss Congreve, father suggested that we should not let our names be known, but keep the fun going, and so turn the tables on them."

"There never was a finer turning of the tables," Mrs. Mitchell exclaimed; "and we all deserved it for so maligning an unknown lady, and old maids in general."

Laughing all together the group joined the rest of the party, and were soon on board the yacht.

Then the real Miss Congreve attached herself to the sham, and Mr. Congreve drew Harry into uttering the most extravagant and laughable remarks imaginable, which amused everybody, until Harry began to have a dim perception that in some way the laugh was being all against himself and co-conspirators.

"I'm getting tired of this, Fred," he muttered. "I want to return to my proper self, so if you don't give the word soon I'll pitch this hat and rubbish overboard."

Mr. Congreve overheard these words, and laying his hand kindly on the lad's shoulder, said—

"You have acted very well, my boy, very cleverly indeed, and given us no end of amusement, so I think you might get rid of your disguise now, and when you have done so, come back to me and let me introduce you to the real Miss Congreve, my daughter Amy."

"Oh, boys!" Isobel exclaimed, while a chorus of "oh's" went up; "oh, boys, I do feel so small. Don't you?"

"Small is no word for my sensations," said Fred. "I never was in such a hot place in my life, I think."

Then the English girl came to their relief. "You misjudged me before you saw me, and we played a trick on you. It is a case of diamond cut diamond, so we are quits. But I didn't take home any of your remarks, I assure you, for I know I am not one bit strong-minded, and I was sure you would give the real Miss Congreve a hearty welcome."

"The real Miss Congreve is very charming indeed," said Isobel frankly; and Fred added—"I'll never judge persons before I see them again, you bet."

Harry Mitchell had, we know, a great deal of self-possession. He was equal to the occasion, and rising from his seat with the simpering airs of the character

he had assumed, said—"I see there has been some little misunderstanding as to whether my niece Miss Amy or myself should be known as 'Miss Congreve.' Before asking you to decide what our titles shall be, permit me to seek the cabin and make some little change in my toilet. I find a riding-skirt rather inconvenient for yachting, and the sea-airs have put my hair out of curl."

Then smiling blandly he sidled to the "companion" and disappeared amid shouts of applause.

"But I want to know," said Isobel, addressing Amy, "how you came to land at Burra Isle instead of Lunda?"

"Father was told in Lerwick of some curious antiquarian remains in Burra, and we also heard of Garth's interesting collections. So we came to Broch, and I don't think I shall like to leave it ever again. It feels like a little Paradise."

"It is Paradisical having you there," whispered Garth over her shoulder, and was rewarded by a smile that set his veins a dancing.

"I suppose," Isobel resumed, "that after our uncomplimentary suppositions regarding your personality, you will not deign to come to the Ha'; and I must confess we deserve it."

"Speak for yourself, my dear," said the Laird. "I never shared your peculiar views regarding Miss Congreve; and I think if you had studied Lady Grove's letter instead of indulging your own fancies, you would have guessed that our expected visitor

did not resemble the curious personage who is your ideal of the lady-tourist."

"I think we were all as bad as Isobel," Isobel's brother chimed in; "and we are all as ready, as she was, to own up, beg pardon, and promise better behaviour in future."

"Say you forgive us," cried Isobel, "and prove you bear no malice by promising to come to Lunda soon."

"I'll gladly promise to come—some time," Amy said, and again smiled at Garth.

CHAPTER IX.

AMONG THE HOLMES.

"We shall have a glorious day," remarked the Laird, as the *Tangie* slipped smoothly along; "not a cloud anywhere, and the sea as smooth as a pond, even by the Holmes. Are you a good sailor, Miss Congreve?"

"On a fine day, yes. But may I ask where we are going, and what is to be done?"

"You are going to sail away into fairyland," said Garth; and the Laird, nodding to him, said—"Tell her the programme, lad, after your own style."

"The *Tangie* will glide from isle to isle, and you will behold marvellous things, seals basking upon skerries, mermaids playing among surf, krakens waving their long tangled arms below the waves, sea-horses riding the breakers, wild-birds talking about you in strange tongues, giants petrified into dark tall rocks, Titans swimming"——

"And Trows talking nonsense," the Yarl interrupted, with a laugh which silenced poor Garth; until Gerta, always on the alert to comfort and encourage her sensitive cousin, remarked—

"You will be the most useful person of the party to-day, Trow, for you are as good as a guide-book. No one else can tell our guests not only the names of all the places, but their history, and legends, and everything. You are a living encyclopædia, Garth."

"I do so love to hear the stories of places," said Miss Congreve; and her father added, speaking to Mr. Halsen—

"I find your son is a very good geologist. He has got a very extensive and accurate knowledge of his native rocks."

"I am not wise in such lore myself," answered the Yarl rather bluntly, "and my tastes don't lie in the way of science, so I confess I have wished Garth cared more for livelier subjects. He is always dreaming over books and scenery and the like."

"The study of God's works," said the scientist, "when entered upon with reverence and humility, is, to my thinking, the grandest employment to which man can give his mind."

"I am not prepared to affirm the contrary," replied Mr. Halsen with a sigh. Then, catching sight of his son's glowing face turned to Mr. Congreve with a look of grateful admiration, the Yarl added—"His study of nature has kept my boy out of mischief, anyhow. If he hadn't taken to the like he might have fared worse, for he has few opportunities of improving himself at Broch."

Garth had moved away, and did not hear what his father said; and it was best he did *not* hear.

Others, however, heard and considered, with results which were of infinite service to the neglected genius at a future time.

"I believe," whispered Gerta to Amy, "that we are to circumnavigate Burra Isle on this expedition, taking some of the holmes and voes *en route*. You see we are sailing along the south side of the island just now, and I am sure the *Tangie* is to return to Burrawick from the north."

"But surely that will take a long time to do—longer than one day, though your island is not large."

"We are to dine on one of the holmes, and we shall reach Üsound on the west coast in the evening. Uncle sent a message to the manse of Üsound that we were coming; so there will be beds there for us girls and Mrs. Mitchell. The rest will stay in the yacht, I suppose. Then we shall be off again in the morning, and home at Broch by midnight. Won't it be fine?"

"But won't we be putting the clergyman's family to a great deal of trouble, and without invitations either?"

"Oh no! It's the way we do in Shetland. There is no one at the manse but the minister and his housekeeper; it is a large house, and they are always delighted when a whole heap of folk come like that. Don't be scared, Amy, at our free-and-easy ways. You will soon like them."

"I *do* like your ways. You are the most hospitable people I ever heard of."

"Oh, look! look, Amy!" Garth exclaimed, "on that skerry to the left, two lovely seals. Oh, what beauties! and they don't seem afraid of us either."

"Their faces are quite human from this distance," said Miss Congreve. "Ah! there, they've gone. How gracefully they slipped from the rock into the water."

"Of course they look human-like," Gerta exclaimed. "Don't you know the legendary natural history of the phoca? Trow can tell it."

"Tell us, Garth," was echoed from all sides; and, nothing loth, the lad repeated one of the many island-legends regarding sealkies. "There are two sorts of seals hereabout. The Greater seals are seamen—human sailors—who have been false in love and have been drowned. The Lesser seals are fallen angels; these take their punishment less philosophically than the Greater ones, and are much wilder. *They* go about in flocks, but the metamorphosed 'Tars' have benefited by their terrible fate, and practise in the sea a constancy they knew not on land. They marry mermaids, who willingly assume sealskin jackets. Have you ever looked into the eyes of a seal? There is a mystery of longing, and pride, and sorrow in their gaze that would make anybody believe that they *are* unhappy spirits of superior origin."

"We have a tame seal at the Ha', Amy," said Isobel. "It is such a little darling, so gentle and obedient, and it goes down to the shore to play

and fish for itself, but it always comes back when I call it."

"I for one," said Mr. Congreve, "shall be delighted to make the acquaintance of your 'fallen angel,' Miss Garson. What an interesting creature it must be! and what a first-class place Shetland is for the fostering of pets."

"Our sealkie Trullya belongs to the greater species," the Laird remarked; "so, according to Garth, *it* is of human, not Satanic origin."

"What a funny, and yet pretty name it has—'Trullya,'" Amy struck in. "What does it mean?" To which Mr. Garson replied—"Any place that is fairy-haunted gets the word 'Trull' prefixed to it. Trull means much the same as trow, as I daresay you know. We found the poor little seal in the Trull-helyer, when it was a helpless, motherless baby; so Isobel adopted it, and named it after the cave which was probably its birthplace."

"Do you ever wonder, as I do," Garth asked Amy in an aside, "what creatures *think* about? They do think, of course, and in many cases they seem to act as if their minds had been reasoning too. But if beasts and birds have not the reflecting faculties, how in the world do they employ their senses? They don't eat and sleep for ever—that we know."

"I am sure," the young lady answered, "that animals *do* have reasoning faculties, and a kind of conscience too. Just look at that dog of yours. He understands what you say to him. He knows what

he may do, and what he may not do. He is grateful, he is obedient, he remembers. Father believes that all animals may be taught, and could exercise as great an intelligence as the dog, if associated with human beings as dogs are. I really see no difference between the *natural* faculties of an animal and our own, I confess. You know many savage tribes have as little sense of moral right as the beasts."

"Certainly Fram is much more civilised than the aborigines of Patagonia," Garth remarked. "But then you can make *anything* of a savage man, and nothing more than a noble beast of the most intelligent dog."

"Father has taught me to believe that our immaterial nature is dual, a soul and a spirit—the first belonging to our physical existence, and mortal as our bodies are mortal; the second of divine origin, and peculiar to us only of all the earthly creation."

"I thought one's *soul* was the divine part of us?"

"Scientists who like to keep to original terms say that among the Greeks, from whence we get so many of our metaphysical thoughts, 'soul' meant animal life, 'spirit' heavenly life."

"Our 'soul' then would be kin to that of the lower animals? That seems a rational theory."

"I don't know that it is borne out by science as at present understood," said Amy, smiling. "But even the wisest men know very little about science—only as much as their own finite intellects can grasp. So we are not presumptuous in adopting views which do

not contradict what is already revealed. Father," she said, turning to Mr. Congreve, "we are discussing one of your hobbies. Come and help us."

"I overheard your conversation, my dear," the scientist replied; "and I don't think I have anything better to say than you have said. Only I should like our young friend to be quite sure that we do not for one moment venture to encroach upon the domain of religious belief when we claim for the lower animals a nature similar in many respects to our own—a life belonging to the flesh which dies with the flesh, but is endowed with mental and moral attributes. This 'soul of the beast that goeth downward to the earth' is only the associate during our pilgrimage on earth of the immortal spirit. You see there is nothing in such a theory against a belief in the reasoning power of man being identical with what we call instinct in animals."

"Any one who has lived among beasts and birds, as I do," Garth exclaimed, "can testify that they have as much sense as we;" and Svein Holtum, who had been listening with profound interest to the conversation, added—"That's true! When you come to Collaster, Miss Congreve, we will show you a colony of beasts and birds and creeping things as civilised, intelligent, and moral as human beings—our companions and friends."

This led to some further talk about the Congreves going to Lunda. Mr. Garson declared that the Ha' had been swindled of its guests; but the Yarl hospi-

tably insisted that they should make his house their headquarters, from whence at some future indefinite date they could go on brief visits to neighbouring islands.

Garth did not speak, but his eager imploring eyes said more than the others' words; and Mr. Congreve, thanking the Laird for his kindness, and glancing at Garth, said—

"I have not nearly exhausted my young friend's museum yet, and he has promised to go geologising with me, so I am afraid selfish interests will keep us in Burra Isle a little longer."

"Garth has promised to take me to the Pict's Broch, from which his home takes its name, he says; and to the fairy-rings that was the Ting, or gathering-place, of the Vikings," said Amy softly.

"We've got Tings, and Picts' Brochs, and stones in Lunda just as good as those of Burra," quoth Isobel, whereat all in hearing laughed; and then general attention was called to a discussion among the lads as to which holme should be chosen for the dining-room.

It was quite time that a landing should take place, for the continuous rocking of the little yacht as she slipped from wave to wave, now on one tack, now on another, was beginning to tell on some of the voyagers. The day was calm certainly, and just enough wind to carry the *Tangie* pleasantly along, but among the holmes and skerries there is always some heaving of the ocean which becomes trying to those who are not accustomed to it.

The Holtum twins had drawn a rug over them, and were pretending to sleep. Miss Congreve was beginning to take less interest in the scenery, and her father was finding it necessary to pace the deck frequently. Ned Langton, with the excuse (which all allowed to be legitimate) of not being very strong yet, had retired to the wee cabin; and Garth had taken to chewing ship's biscuit with not much appearance of enjoying it, but more as though it were a precaution against some dreaded evil.

"We shall have them all sea-sick directly, sir, if we don't land," Fred had remarked to the Yarl, who then called a council, and by unanimous vote it was decided that the yacht should cast anchor by Hovaholme, a pretty little island with a miniature creek, sandy-beached on one side, and some fine cliffs on the other. It was carpeted with soft green grass, and inhabited by three solemn-visaged sheep and a colony of sea-birds.

Rolf and Gloy, with a bountiful basket of provisions for compensation, were left on board to look after the yacht.

It was wonderful to see how soon those of the party who had become somewhat abstracted and silent on board grew merry and talkative as soon as their feet were on *terra firma* again. The twins were soon busy, under Mrs. Mitchell's directions, in arranging the table, while the invalid Ned was at once the most active of the volunteers who proceeded to light a fire.

Amy and Garth were off in a moment, as spry as hawks, to hunt for shells and watch the sea-birds, while Mr. Congreve—who had seemed likely to be the first victim to *mal de mere*—was chipping rocks and digging up roots half a minute after landing.

The Yarl smiled a grim smile as he noted the sudden change, and turning to Mr. Garson remarked—

"Britons boast themselves of Norse stock, but I fear *their* sea-king blood has got some milk mixed with the 'gude salt brine' that should season it. Launch them to dip between a few North Sea rollers and they're done for."

A very pleasant and hearty meal was lingeringly enjoyed upon Hovaholme, and there the ladies with a few of the more sedate "masculines" preferred to remain for a couple of hours longer, while Captain Fred and his restless comrades took a cruise among some outlying skerries, where the surf—curling white about the rocks—indicated more sea than some of the party cared to encounter.

Amy Congreve was sure she had never enjoyed anything so much in her life as that afternoon on Hovaholme. The sunshine was so pure and mellow, the sea-breezes so exhilarating, and the sparkling blue and white ocean so mysterious, so harmonious, so majestic.

When the lads had departed, the others grouped themselves on a knoll above the sandy shore, where they could watch the *Tangie* threading her way among

the islets and rocks as if she were a living creature and knew exactly how to go and where.

Mr. Halsen was with the yacht, and his son always seemed less restrained in the Yarl's absence, so when Garth was called upon for a legend he readily consented, and held his companions spell-bound while he repeated some of the folk-lore connected with that locality.

Then in a manner peculiarly her own Mrs. Mitchell led the conversation from legend to religion; and great was Garth's delight to hear her explain how those wild stories of stern vengeance, savage generosity, rugged self-denial, rude insistance on moral duties, held the germs of our more holy creed, and were indeed the beginnings of a nobler life and faith.

In a shadowy way the boy had felt the spiritual beauty of those myths and traditions, but he had not grasped their true significance until Mrs. Mitchell pointed it out; and he drank in all she said with delight. Thus the time was whiled away until the yacht came back, when all were soon afloat again.

By that time the breeze had freshened rather more, which carried the sloop along more steadily. Also the soft "dim" was drawing down, wrapping each scene in a grey veil, suggestive of rest; so the *Tangie* ran for Üsound, where she had been expected for some hours.

A large boat was lying ready to convey the party

ashore, and though the hour was late, and some of the lads sleepy, the minister would take no refusal, but hustled every one out of the yacht, saying—"Kirsty has got a ponderous hot supper ready to put on the table, and she has spread 'shake-downs' all over the Manse. She would break her heart if you did not all come with me." And not one of the most enthusiastic yachtsmen could say that Kirsty's hot supper and shake-downs were not preferable to their own rough cooking and the *Tangie's* little cabin.

CHAPTER X.

THE BROCH OF BURRA ISLE.

VERY grateful was the Manse hospitality to the travellers. Very sound were the slumbers of all that night, and the morning was far advanced before any one felt inclined to get up. But an early start had been determined upon, and the Yarl beat an impatient tattoo upon every door, which soon brought the whole party together in the breakfast-room.

"We're going to have a brisk run to the nor'rard to-day, Mrs. Mitchell," said Mr. Garson, as he bade her good morning. "Just the thing *you* like; but I don't know how some of our girls are going to stand it."

"You might as well add 'some of our boys,' father," retorted Isobel, and she glanced mockingly at Garth, who had shrugged his shoulders a moment before, and declared that a cut across the hills to Broch, by way of the fairy-rings and Hel-ya-brün, would be much more pleasant and edifying than a sail round the North Ness in a gale.

Garth did not mind scoffs of the sort. He never minded saying that he was not fond of *violent* amuse-

ments, and liable to sea sickness: so he only smiled at Isobel and remarked—"You're right; some of the boys don't want to taste 'saut faem' off the North Ness, and I believe if it were put to the vote I should have a good number of my way of thinking."

"Oh, you calf!" exclaimed his father angrily, and Garth subsided at once. However, his argument was taken up by an able second.

"I am afraid, Mr. Halsen," said the scientist, "that you have got a good many 'calves' here. I for one, and my daughter for another. And I observe the twin maidens have been looking at the tossing waves with not unmixed joy."

"If you would rather return to Broch by land," said the Yarl courteously, "by all means. This is a pleasure-party, and everybody must please her and himself. So, my friends, act on Garth's hint—put it to the vote."

"Hands up for the yacht," cried Fred; and to his unbounded satisfaction, Isobel first, then Mrs. Mitchell and her boys, Gerta and the Holtum brothers, also Ned Langton, held up their hands.

"Hurrah for the *Tangie!* Father, I did not see *your* hand go," said the "Captain."

"The Yarl goes with you, my son," answered the Laird, "so perhaps *I* ought to—what shall I call it?—chaperon the land party. And I think, Langton, my boy, that you had better come with us. You are too lean and white yet to take share in that rouser off the Ness.'

"I hope it is not going to be—unpleasant, not to mention dangerous, Mr. Garson?" the Englishman asked, and glanced at Mrs. Mitchell, who smiled back her implicit trust in the Captain, owner, and crew of the *Tangie*. The Yarl took it all as a fine joke, and laughing heartily, exclaimed—"We'll race you landlubbers to Burrawick. I'll bet two to one on the *Tangie*, though she has to round the North Ness, and you have a straight road as the bird flies to the door of Broch."

"I don't think we can take up your challenge, my friend," answered the Laird. "Mr. Congreve wishes to see some of the 'lions' by the way; so I think we can spend a good many hours between Üsound and Broch, and spend them pleasantly too."

Those who were to go in the yacht started immediately after breakfast, and the *Tangie*, under plenty of canvas, went careening out to sea in fine style.

"Dear me!" Amy exclaimed, "how the spray seems to fly about her bows, and isn't she lying over to one side *very* much? I feel almost frightened about them."

"You needn't be," answered Mr. Garson; "she's a fine vessel, and carries two of the best seamen in our Islands,—the Yarl and Rolf Soeder. And my Fred knows what he is about. They are showing off a bit in the Sound for our edification; but when they come out in the open we shall see less of the *Tangie's* wings."

Sure enough when the sloop got out of the shelter

of Üsound, and met heavier sea, her sails were reefed, and she took an easier course, which carried her steadily and swiftly forward.

"At that rate," Mr. Garson remarked, "they will make Burrawick by the afternoon, so perhaps we should not lose time in getting under weigh too."

The hint was taken, and in spite of the minister's hospitable protestations, the pedestrians set out without further delay. A walk of two miles over a smooth hill covered with short soft grass and lovely alpine flowers brought them to the ruined Broch, situated near the summit of a cliff which rose from a fathomless depth of ocean, and commanded a most extensive view of both sea and land.

All that was left of the Broch was a confused heap of stones, and Amy was much disappointed, having expected to see a picturesque ruin like the old Rhine Castles or the beautiful fragments of sacred buildings which remain in Scotland to tell of the terrible struggles through which she fought her way to religious and civil independence.

Garth, however, knew that as great an interest attached to the Broch, insignificant though it appeared, since it spoke of a time far before that of German Baron or Scottish Ecclesiastic; and though Amy—in her disappointment—averred that "it might have been a barn, or any common building," his antiquarian instincts were not damped in the least: therefore he proceeded to point out to his companions all that he knew to be interesting about the ruin, while Mr.

Congreve gave them a description of Brochs in general. "These buildings," he ended, "seem to have been chiefly built under ground. I suppose this one is no exception to that rule, eh, Garth?"

"It can't have had more than one storey above the level of the earth, I think," the boy answered; "and I am quite sure there are two, if not three, stories below."

"Have you made any excavations?" the scientist asked, feeling the greatest interest in what Garth affirmed.

"I just turned over a few of the stones; but you see the ruin has all got filled up with earth and grown over, and I could not do much by myself, and"——

Garth stopped short and turned his flushed face aside as if he had come near an unpleasant subject.

Mr. Garson finished his sentence for him. "Garth's father has a number of conservative prejudices, Mr. Congreve, and he has always prohibited folk from touching this old Broch. He believes that his ancestors lived here. Certainly it is from the Broch that Burra takes its name, for both words mean identically the same thing, as you know; and a Halsen has been Yarl of this isle as far back as tradition goes."

"Yet," answered Mr. Congreve, shaking his head, and with all his antiquarian instincts on the *qui vive*, "I cannot sympathise with the present Yarl's reluctance to investigate these interesting memorials, and

I hope his son may yet be allowed to prosecute researches which should be a boon to all who are interested in the history of mankind;" and as he spoke the scientist shoved his walking-stick among the heaped-up stones, as if the temptation to overturn them were mastering all deference to the prejudices of his host.

"Garth can tell you how this Broch is supposed to have become a ruin. The tradition connected with it is familiar to all of us, but this lad has a remarkable faculty for rejecting such portions of legendary lore as are not compatible with history, and yet retaining all that gives beauty and romance to the story. Let the Scald speak!"

"Yes, do tell us!" Amy pleaded; and Garth began in story-fashion:—

"There was an old Hoskuld Halsen who owned all this island, and who lived in the Broch. He was a Viking, and used to sail away for long months, but whenever he returned there was feasting and merriment, because his voyages were always successful. It became rumoured that he had great store of 'spoil' hid in the Broch, and this raised the envy and cupidity of his neighbours. So once, when Yarl Hoskuld was far from home, a rival Viking, Garth by name, attacked the Broch, which was ill-defended in its master's absence. The serfs were slaughtered, the women taken for slaves, and Hoskuld's son, a brave stripling, was carried away as hostage. But the treasure which the Yarl was supposed to possess

was not found, and enraged at being so disappointed Garth set fire to the building; so when Hoskuld returned there was nothing left of his home but this ruin."

The lad stopped there. In imagination he was back beside his ancestor, gazing on the devastation wrought amid his "household gods," sorrowing and brooding over schemes of vengeance; and Garth's companions, carried along with him by the power of his simple narrative, were silent too for a little.

Then Ned Langton remarked—"Those were wild and cruel times, yet I wonder if our own have reached a higher stage. To be sure, we punish lawless crime, but there is the licensed crime of war, and the licensed crime of sport, that seem to me no better than the horrible raids and wanton slaughter of olden times. Men preach Christ, but *nationally* they do not practise His gentle creed."

Amy nodded assent to Langton's sentiments; but Garth was still in the past, and had not heard what was said. His abstraction caused a smile all round, but the nineteenth century girls were not willing that he should longer indulge in such musings.

"Oh, tell us what came next!" they cried; and even sober Ned Langton said, "It's awfully interesting, do go on."

"Garth lived in Lunda, and he had left a message for his rival. He told the peasants to tell their Yarl that when Hoskuld's foot was set on Garth's land, the death-cry of Hoskuld's son should be the father's

welcome. What could the Viking do? Nothing! He set sail again for far lands, and he never came back, though for several years his people hoped and expected that he would certainly return.

"After some years his son returned to Burra Isle. He had grown strong like his father. He had been cared for well during his captivity, having won old Garth's heart by his courage and nobility of character. And young Hoskuld did not come to take his father's place alone, for he had married Garth's daughter, and she accompanied him. They built the old house in Burrawick, and named it Broch; and so the old feud was extinguished. But—I have so often longed to know what was the end of poor old Hoskuld."

"If I had been young Hoskuld," said Ned, "I'd have gone straight away and dug up the old Broch till I had exhumed the Viking's treasure."

"Perhaps he did," said Amy; but Mr. Garson shook his head.

"I don't suppose," said he, "there was any treasure there to find. Those old Vikings usually carried their gold and jewels about with them. I expect the old boy went away full-handed and set up for a respectable landsman somewhere else—eh, Garth?"

"I'm sure he did nothing of the sort," Amy protested. "He went away to fight, and was killed, and was buried like all the Vikings in a burning ship."

"I think," said Mr. Congreve, "that I must try my powers of persuasion with the Yarl in the cause

of science, and see if he can't be persuaded to allow Garth and myself to make some respectful excavations here."

"And dig up the gold and jewels, and make Garth rich! You are a good fairy, father," laughed Amy.

"That should remind us," said Garth, "that the fairy-rings have to be visited, and time flies."

"Forward! March, then!" said the Laird.

CHAPTER XI.

FAIRY-RINGS.

THE fairy-rings of Burra Isle are situated on a level part of the hill which commands a view of the ocean all round. Garth Halsen said that it was there the people of olden times gathered "in council." They chose that site so that they could keep watch and ward over the island when so assembled, for no hostile bark could approach without being seen from there.

Mr. Congreve was inclined to dispute Garth's theory, and adopt one which attributes the fairy-rings to a much earlier period when a race, unknown to history, peopled the isles—sun-worshippers, whose altars to nature-gods were erected within these circles now known as "fairy-rings."

"I have liked to believe," said Garth, modestly deferring to the scientist's opinion, "that our Norse ancestors left these traces of their rule. I have never been quite enough interested in those 'Pechs' that one hears so much about, and I don't like to think that Scotland sent them here before the Norsemen; but of course you know best."

"No genuine Shetlander likes to say that his country has ever got any gift, in particular a family tree, from Scotland," laughed Mr. Garson; and Mr. Congreve answered Garth good-humouredly—

"Don't accept the Pechs from Scotia if you don't wish to. They more probably came here from Norway than from Scotland. Nay, don't look incredulous. This is a new but rational theory, and not one of *my* invention. You know the Lapps and Esquimaux resemble closely what tradition and inference tell of the Picts, and it is quite certain that Scandinavia was at one time peopled by those races, so perhaps your despised 'Pechs' were after all the original Northmen."

"Oh, horrors! surely not! Those little, hairy, dark-skinned creatures who burrowed in the earth, and never went upon the sea if they could help it! I just believe that they were nothing more than the slaves or serfs of the Norsemen, and that they died out here because they could never become a seafaring people; for only a race that loved the sea, and prospered by it, was fit to exist in Shetland."

"Serfs or no, they left distinct traces of a peculiar people in your islands, my lad," said Mr. Congreve; "a people as different from the Norsemen (proper) as night differs from day."

"But they must have been exterminated, or quite absorbed, by the stronger race," Garth urged; "for the Shetlanders have no characteristics of the Pechs —they are Norske all over."

"Oh, I certainly think your descent is plain from the pirates of Gamle Norge—none else." To which Garth answered gaily—"That's as good a pedigree as I want."

By that time the fairy-rings were reached, and Amy could not help exclaiming at the beauty of the spot. The kindly green turf had spread itself over the stone circles, which looked like three smooth, stationary billows curved round one another, a few feet apart. At one side there was a flat place, which evidently marked what had been a way of egress. In the centre was a small heap of stones, which at one time must have been a regularly built erection, and on that pile of lichened boulders a pair of wheatears were "chat-chat-chatting" in the most excited manner.

"They've got a nest there, as sure as anything," said Garth. "They won't fly far, be sure."

"What little beauties!" Amy exclaimed. Then seeing her father step forward with the intention of inspecting the stone heap closely, she added—"O father! don't disturb the darlings. There isn't anything more to be seen there. Please don't vex the birdies any more. Just see what a state they're in. Oh, you dear little pets, you needn't scold so much, for I won't let anybody hurt your babies."

"My dear, you are as 'chat-chat-chatty' as a wheatear yourself," answered Mr. Congreve, stepping back as if he had set his foot on a wasp's nest!

"These stones have all been turned over times

without number," said Garth, "and everything interesting about the place has been removed."

"Yes," added the Laird, "I am sorry to say that learned societies, curiosity-hunters, and inquisitive tourists have 'messed' many old remains by indiscriminate research. If I did not wage incessant war with such folk I should find Lunda itself turned upside down and outside in some fine day!"

While the Laird was speaking they had all drawn softly away, and the wheatears, concluding from their polite retirement that no harm would be done by the visitors, came back at once and renewed their sweet chattering.

The girls plucked some wild flowers growing by the fairy-rings, and then the whole party moved slowly down the hill, leaving the birdies in possession.

"Ho! look at the yacht!" Ned cried out presently. "Oh, isn't she going it in style, to be sure?"

All eyes were turned north, and a halt was made that they might watch the *Tangie's* course for a few minutes.

She had run well out to sea to avoid cross currents, making a good deal of commotion around the headlands just then; but at the moment when she drew the attention of our friends the natty little craft was making for the North Ness in a slanting direction. She was coming along rapidly, borne onward by a fair strong breeze, with her sails reefed, the foam churning around her bows, and her flag dancing in the wind like a butterfly on wing.

"How beautiful she looks, but I am glad I am not there," remarked Amy; and Nye said—"They must all be quite wet through; see how the spray is flying over the deck; and how she lies over to be sure!"

"Salt water never does any harm, lassie," said the Laird; "and I expect the girls are enjoying the run hugely. As for Mrs. Mitchell, she is as bad as her boys. She is never so happy as when she is on the sea flying before a gale."

"We shall have to hurry up if we are to reach Broch before them," remarked Mr. Congreve. "I don't know much about such matters, but if I am not very much mistaken the yacht will be round that point shortly, and after *that* she will soon make her port."

"It don't matter; let them win the race," Garth pleaded. "It is so delightful wandering along in this lazy fashion by hill and dale."

"True, lad; but some of us are becoming hungry, and some of us are getting tired," said the Laird.

"Then," answered Garth, "let us stop at Mam Breeta's. She was my nurse, you know, and is always glad when I come to see her. That's her cottage, the wee tidy house by Hel-ya-brün, at the foot of the hill. Doesn't it look pretty beside the stream, with the knowes behind it, and the green meadow sloping away to the moor in front? We can rest there as long as we like, and Mam Breeta will give us a downright jolly lunch. I know her sort of feed!"

Garth's proposal was agreed to, and all the party

instantly proceeded to make a descent upon Breeta's cottage, into which her foster-son unceremoniously ushered them, saying, as he greeted his nurse, "I've brought a lot of tired hungry folk with me, Mam Breeta, but I know you won't mind." She didn't mind, not she! The good woman was quite delighted: so our friends spread themselves upon the banks of Hel-ya-brün, and waited patiently till she had prepared a meal for them.

"I suppose this is one of your favourite haunts, Garth?" one of the girls said; and Mr. Garson laughingly added—

"Gerta Bruce would say that Trows do *not* frequent holy burns, so there must be an anomaly in Garth's predilection for Hel-ya-brün. Can you give us an explanation of it, laddie?"

"It is a very lovely and quiet place," the boy answered in a low voice, while a melancholy expression fell upon his face. "I come *here* when I want to think of—of things—better than—even books and specimens." He paused, and his gaze followed the course of the sparkling stream, as it meandered down the sloping hill, tossing its tiny white ruffles upon the glossy brown and grey boulders which lay in its course.

Evidently Garth Halsen had learned a great deal from the silver-voiced Hel-ya-brün; and by-and-by he let that be known. In soft, dreamy tones, he resumed—

"It is a pure fountain of living water. Long ago

the people said that diseases were cured by drinking of this stream. They said that children, pining under the spells of witchcraft, could be freed by being dipped in it. Lovers desirous of keeping faithful to each other plighted their troth with hands clasped across the burn. Women, heartsick for those at sea, cast blossoms on the stream, assured that the fate of the men afloat and far away would be figured in the course of that which they gave to Hel-ya-brün. With prayers they followed the dancing wavelets bearing their hopes; and whether these were broken on a boulder, submerged in the stream, or left intact upon its margin, the women took the token for truth. I come here to dream and hope. Hel-ya-brün seems to me indeed very 'holy,' like those living waters of which the Bible speaks, I often think. It reminds me of so much in the Bible, that I like to read the Bible *here* best of any place. All those beautiful passages about the River of Life, the streams that make glad, the waters for which the soul thirsteth, become real and vivid *here*."

"That is a beautiful way of thinking," Amy faltered, tears welling up in her eyes as she spoke. They were all touched by Garth's words, spoken as if he were musing aloud, quite unconscious of listeners. But Miss Congreve's words brought him back to keen participation in the present moment, and his face flushed crimson as he realised that he had made himself the observed of all observers.

"I am afraid I have been havering," he stammered.

"Certainly not," said the Laird; "we all fully sympathise in your feelings. I was just thinking that even the superstitions connected with Hel-ya-brün have a fine morality concealed within their foolishness—as many superstitions have."

"The cold-water cure, I imagine," Mr. Congreve said, "had its origin in the magic power of holy water."

After that the conversation took a lighter turn, and was carried on, lively jokes interspersed with scientific revelations, until Mam Breeta called them.

She had not kept them waiting very long. With the help of her two daughters she soon prepared "food fit for a king" (as Mr. Congreve pronounced it afterwards), and she spread their table by Amy's request on a grassy corner of her kail-yard. New potatoes, piping hot, and sweet as green peas, with fat "piltacks" (a delicious kind of fish) and roasted eggs formed the first course. Curds, with rich cream, pancakes, scones, "burstin' brünies" and fresh butter followed, with plenteous draughts of clear, sharp quenching "soor-blaand." Last came the unfailing accompaniment to a perfect meal (in the opinion of Shetlanders), namely, tea!

"I don't think I have enjoyed food so much as *this* since I was a boy at school and gorged myself from a birthday hamper," Mr. Congreve said, as he sipped his tea. "I hope," he added, in a low whisper to the Laird, "that we may be allowed to recompense the good dame for such hospitality."

"No, no! she would be very much hurt. Garth knows her ways — the ways of our high-minded peasantry—leave *him* to settle that matter."

I may mention here that though the Laird of Lunda dissuaded Mr. Congreve from offering a "tip" to the widow, he did not let her kindness go unrewarded. Some time afterwards a large parcel of valuable gifts reached the cottage by Hel-ya-brün from the Ha' "with Mrs. Garson's best wishes," and Breeta knew very well that it was the Laird's delicate way of proving his appreciation of her hospitality.

But Amy and her father did not forget that "food fit for a king," nor their humble hostess; and we may be assured they contrived to reward her later without hurting her feelings.

"Am rale blide,"[1] Breeta said, when she was parting from her guests, "that my dear bairn (I still ca' Mr. Garth 'my bairn'—gude bless him!) has gotten young folk aside him at Broch. Dear lamb! he was ower muckle left tae himsel', and never had a body ta mak a laugh wi' unless it micht be his dog, or his scorie.[2] But there's a differ come ower him sin Miss Bruce cam to the isle. There's a licht in his ee that was never there afore. Yea, my dears, the young needs the company o' the young, and I'm thankfu' ta Providence for sendin' bonnie young craters ta Broch."

Garth had bidden his nurse good-bye before that speech was delivered, and did not hear it; for when

[1] Very glad. [2] Seagull.

she was speaking he was racing along the knowes in pursuit of Amy, who had coaxed Fram away with her, and was skimming over the heath like a lapwing. The rest followed at a quick walk, and before long were within a short distance of Broch, and overlooking Burrawick.

"The *Tangie* isn't in sight yet. We've beat her after all," was Ned's first words, when they could make sure that the yacht had not arrived; but his "crow" met a rebuke in the Laird's remark—"I'd have been better pleased," he said, "if she had got in before us. At the rate she was going, off the Ness, she ought to have been at her anchorage now."

Ned looked at the speaker quickly, and caught sight of a restless, anxious expression in Mr. Garson's eyes.

"They're all right, sir, of course?" he inquired.

"All right—yes—of course. Oh yes, all right," and that satisfied Ned; but he would not have followed the girls and Mr. Congreve so quietly indoors if he had overheard the Laird ask Garth—"What's your shortest cut to the hill-head overlooking the North Ness?"

"Over Crushafiel, but what—why"—— The Laird was off, striding across the fields, and Garth ran after him. "Are you—anxious, sir?" he asked.

"They ought to have been in," was the curt reply, to which Garth could make no answer; and in

silence the two hurried to the high land, which was fortunately quite near Broch.

With keen, eager glance — when the vantage-ground was reached—they scanned the sea around the Ness, but the *Tangie* was nowhere to be seen!

CHAPTER XII.

THE "TANGIE'S" ESCAPADE.

Mr. Garson's face grew ghastly white and his hand fell heavily on Garth's shoulder, when they had satisfied themselves that the little yacht was not anywhere off the Ness, nor near the fiord. There were no harbours on that side of the island, nor any reason why the *Tangie* should seek one at that time. Yet neither wind nor wave were "raised" enough to cause the least anxiety if all was right on board. "Something must have gone wrong" was in the minds of the two as they stood dumb, helpless, grief-stricken on the hill, and gazed upon the ocean vainly striving to discover on its restless bosom some vestige of the vessel they had so short a time before been watching with pride as she pursued her free and apparently safe course.

"What *can* have happened? she must be *somewhere*," Garth gasped out at length, his young spirit altogether unable to believe that a catastrophe had occurred. He was answered by something more convincing than any words; for, as he spoke, the Laird's hand slid from its support, and the strong man fell to

the earth moaning, "My bairns! God be near them! my girl! oh, my son, my son!"

Garth Halsen never could tell why (as he heard those affecting words and knew that the Laird feared the worst) his mind flung all fears from it by one great convulsive effort, and he felt strong and assured at once. Kneeling by the stricken father he slipped a soft hand into his and whispered, "I feel as if God were bidding me to tell you to look up and trust Him. Dear Mr. Garson, I am sure He has them safe. Does He not hold the seas in the hollow of His Hand?"

A long-drawn sigh and a low murmured "His will be done" was the Laird's response. Then he lifted himself from the ground, remembering that Garth's loss with the *Tangie* was as terrible as his own. "Poor boy!" he faltered, clasping closely the hand in his; "we suffer together."

"Nay! nay!" said Garth, bravely gulping down the lump in his throat. "It can't be! trust God! Just think, sir! The *Tangie* is well-found, and carries experienced hands. There is nothing more than a smart breeze and no sea to speak of to-day—nothing that could harm *her*. I should not wonder if they have changed their minds and taken a run out again. If they ran west the Mull of Swarta would hide them from us, and if they went north they are probably behind Havnholme or the Ootskerries. Oh, I feel sure something of the sort explains it. Do take comfort! It is always so comforting to rest on God, and know that He is over all."

"Yes. Thank you, Garth, for helping me," the poor man answered, trying to grasp at his companion's faith-inspired hope. So the two sat for some time striving to encourage themselves, and never taking their eyes from the sea.

Thus a long hour went past—the longest and most mournful hour that the Laird of Lunda ever spent in his life; and then a melodious "Cooee!" accompanied by the excited barking of Fram, told Garth that Amy Congreve and her companions were coming up the brae.

"My dog is bringing them after us," the lad said hurriedly; "and I don't think *they* are alarmed. See, the girls are all laughing, and Mr. Congreve and Langton are lounging about quite unconcernedly."

"We had better go and meet them;" and leaning heavily on Garth's arm, the Laird moved slowly forward looking on the ground, as did the lad, neither feeling able to meet the girls' bright laughing looks.

Amy was the first to notice the pale averted faces, and she cried out, "What is it? what has happened?" while her own cheeks turned white.

"We cannot see the *Tangie* anywhere," said Garth, feeling it was best to tell the trouble at once. But what was his joy when Amy, in reply, clapped her hands merrily and exclaimed—

"Oh, if that's all, we can ease your minds at once. The yacht is all right, though you can't see her from *here*. The servants at Broch told us they saw her scudding past Burrawick a full hour before we arrived.

She means to do something more than circumnavigate Burra Isle, for she crossed the entrance to this fiord and sailed away round Hovaness. I suppose these insatiable sea-dogs don't want to come to anchor before evening."

By the time Amy finished, Mr. Garson had recovered himself a little; but his voice was shaky as he thanked her for such good news, and tears sprang to the girl's eyes as she looked at his face, drawn and haggard through that hour's agony.

"I wonder," Kate Holtum exclaimed, "why one always jumps to the worst conclusion when things are in the dark? One always believes something dreadful has happened, and it would be quite as easy and much more satisfactory to believe the reverse."

"I fear," said Mr. Garson, rallying himself a little more as Amy's explanation impressed itself as the true one upon his mind, lifting the weight from it; "I fear the reason why our hearts tremble instead of trust is that our faith is weak, and we are not in the habit of casting our care on One who careth for us. I speak, in humility of spirit, for myself. I have been taught a lesson in this by Garth, who—was—brave—and—and helped me—up on the hill yonder. There, my dears, I must just own myself terribly weak at this moment. It was a great shock. I'll go into the house and rest for a little by myself—and—give thanks. Afterwards I shall be able to meet you and them like myself."

"And we," said Garth, turning to Ned, "will mean-

while take a run to Hovaness and see what the yacht is about, if you will excuse us, Mr. Congreve. Perhaps Amy will do the duties of host and hostess combined in our absence."

"That I will gladly; but you won't be long away, will you?" the girl made answer.

"Hadn't you better send some one else?" said Mr. Congreve. "You have had a long walk to-day, and a good deal of trying excitement besides. You are neither of you particularly strong lads, and I am sure Mr. Halsen will be extremely vexed if one or other gets knocked up at present."

The lads admitted that they *were* tired, so a youth from the hamlet was despatched to Hovaness as scout. He was not long absent, and restored the spirits of our friends by reporting the *Tangie* as "a' richt," and not far away. "Bit what she's doing out-by I canna weel say," said Tammy; "she's rinnin' here and rinnin' there, and hovin' this way and that, as if she had no' a wise head aboard o' her, nor a hand worth the grippin' ta haud her helm. It's verra strange, I man say, and I canna mak it oot ava. But ae thing is sure—there's naething *wrang* wi' the *Tangie*."

With this report the waiting little party at Broch were obliged to be satisfied, but many and wild were their conjectures regarding the yacht's delay.

Perhaps we had better now leave our friends at Broch, and follow the yacht whose erratic movements had been so inexplicable, and had caused such anxiety. When she came off the North Ness, in full view of

Burrawick, and all the holmes and skerries and stacks among which they had sailed on the previous day, the Yarl (as was his wont) amused himself and his companions by taking observations through his old-fashioned spyglass.

While so employed his attention was drawn to an object moving on a distant skerry. It was too large for a bird, too active for a seal; but the surf flying around the rock as well as the motion of the sloop made it impossible for any one to decide further than that the creature was a living one, and by no means at home on that isolated spot. The skerry was low, scarcely above high-water mark, and nothing grew upon it save tang, with perhaps some zoophites and shell-fish.

A very brief consultation with Captain Fred and old Rolf decided Mr. Halsen to guide the sloop towards the skerry. Fred had been steering, and doing it well, until then; but neither he, nor Rolf, nor any other, was so competent as the Yarl to take a vessel to that locality at such a time.

"I'll steer, if you please, Captain," the worthy gentleman said. "I know the ground and the little craft best—not that there is the least danger in going nearer the skerries a bit; but one should always be cautious on the sea. The boldest and best seamen are never foolhardy."

"Yet even if it *is* a little hazardous," said Mrs. Mitchell, "surely you are right in going? The life of even a sheep or pony is worth the venture."

"I would not take the *Tangie* with her present freight on board into the smallest peril for any life whatever, madame! But we run no risk in going near enough to discover what the thing is. When we know *that*, it will be time enough to consider the next step."

"I am quite sure," Fred remarked, after a prolonged stare through the spyglass, "that the creature does not like being there, and can't live there. Do you know, I could almost fancy it is a man moving about on his hands and knees."

"What! eh? Give me the glass, lad," Mr. Halsen cried; and the excitement of all rose to fever pitch at Fred's supposition.

"As like as not you're right," said Svein. "A man would be afraid to stand up for fear of being washed off, or slipping on that wet tang."

"He could not have been there yesterday, else we'd have spotted him," Harry remarked; "and how could a man have got there since?"

"How indeed!" exclaimed Mrs. Mitchell. "Well, Mr. Halsen, what is it?"

"A poor beast of a dog, I believe; but there's something else puzzling me—I can't quite make out yet—I fancy there's something white lying on the skerry — something lumpish, and white, and quite motionless. Fred, lad, your eyes are younger. Take a look and tell us what *you* see."

The yacht by that time was far past the mouth of Burrawick, and no great distance from the rock which had drawn her like a lodestone.

Fred looked long and earnestly, and then turning to the rest with a very grave face, he said—"I am almost sure there is a man lying stretched on the skerry."

"Oh!" "Poor fellow!" "Poor man, how can he have got there!" were a few of the ejaculations uttered when this sad fact was stated, and every eye was strained on the rock.

Soon the yacht was near enough for all to see without the aid of glasses, and even the older lads felt the tears rushing to their eyes at sight of the dog—a large collie—stationing himself beside the prostrate form, and howling piteously, when he saw the sloop draw near.

"Poor old dog!" Svein exclaimed. "He ran about at first to attract attention, but *now* he knows we see him, and is trying to tell his story. That will be his master, I suppose."

"I don't know how we are going to get them off the skerry," the Yarl said musingly. "The *Tangie* can't go nearer, and the dingy is too light for such a job."

"Oh, for the *Laulie!*" exclaimed the Manse boys in chorus.

"I suppose the poor man is dead?" Mrs. Mitchell asked. To which Rolf, shaking his head sorrowfully, replied, "Yea! yea! nae doubt he man be that noo."

"I see the Lunda boats are still out, but making

for home," said Eric. "Suppose we run along, and hail one? They could help us."

"Good for you, Eric!" chorused his chums; and in spite of the dog's pathetic appeals—he not comprehending of course why they so deserted him—the *Tangie* bore away to intercept a haaf-boat.

CHAPTER XIII.

A BRAVE RESCUE.

As luck would have it, the first boat that the *Tangie* hailed was that of Ned Harper. Those who are at all acquainted with the adventures of the Lads of Lunda, will remember that Harper was the skipper of a "fourareen," and that the crew consisted of his cripple brother Bartle and two younger men.

No sooner did they understand what was wanted of them, than they cheerfully agreed to render every assistance in their power.

"Though it be but a dead man and a dog," said Bartle, "we'll tak them aff the skerry. My wird! *I* ken but ower weel what it's like to be hanging on tae the tang o' a bau!"[1]

"And we ken, you and me," said his brother, "what it's like ta hae the Manse laddies saving wi'oot a thocht o' themselves. I'd risk my life, at Maister Eric's biddin', for an auld grey cat—letting alane a senseful collie that's mair human than mony folk."

[1] A "bau" in this case means a rock over which the sea rolls at high-water.

"Ay," answered Bartle, "and foreby that, Ned, there's the puir corpse that man hae Christian burial."

There is an old superstitious belief in the Shetland Isles that the souls of the drowned do not find rest while the body is tossed about at the mercy of the unhallowed sea. When the body has dissolved into the elements, or been buried in earth, then it is supposed that the spirit is at peace; but not till then, and people are afraid to be out alone in the evening lest the wandering ghost may intercept them; for, during that time of unrest, it is understood to be yearning to hold converse with its friends in the body!

Another and much more harmful superstition has it that "the rescued from the sea shall live to do his rescuer some deadly wrong," and men are warned to "haud their hands frae life that the sea canna quench."

Thus, one strange belief has often led the natives to risk much in rescuing the dead from old Ocean's grasp; while another and most pernicious belief has as often deterred men from attempting to save the living.

Fortunately for the poor collie and his dead master, not one of those engaged in the humane effort to take them from that rock were in the smallest degree influenced by such foolish traditions, though Bartle had alluded to "Christian burial," as though he believed that those whom the sea enclose are less fortunate than such as lie in "kirkyards at hame."

No doubt some of these feelings are very natural, and are warranted by divine authority, as we find in some of the most touching of the Bible stories, such as Joseph's instructions to the Jews to carry his bones with them to the land promised of God to His people. But we, who put our trust in "things not seen," though we sympathise in such sentiments, are yet willing to take comfort regarding our departed ones in the blessed truth that they are "for ever with the Lord," and that—as Jean Ingelow so sweetly sings—

"Men must die,—one dies by day, and near him moans his mother,
They dig his grave, tread it down, and go from it full loth;
And one dies about the midnight, and the wind moans, and no other,
And the seas give him a burial,—*and God loves them both.*"

There were many speculations on board the yacht as to who the dead man was, from whence he came, and so forth; and it was generally accepted that he must have belonged to one of the nearest islands, Lunda or Burra, and had probably been washed off the rocks, or had belonged to some cranky skiff at the eela which had been upset through mismanagement. Mr. Halsen never would allow that a Shetland boat, well-found and well-manned, could come to grief except through gross mismanagement. He affirmed that the man must have met his death by some most extraordinary accident. The talk on this engrossing

subject sobered the high-spirited young creatures considerably.

The fourareen and her crew were just what the *Tangie* required to help her, so a rope was flung to Ned Harper, the boat came alongside, and the men clambered into the sloop, which turned again for the skerry.

I am afraid the unfortunate canine had been cursing men in his heart, and comparing their selfish indifference with the fidelity of his own race to the disadvantage of humanity, during the hour which intervened between the *Tangie's* first and second approach. But his melancholy howls were changed to joyous barking when he beheld a well-manned boat put off from the vessel and make straight for the rock. Bartle's place had been taken by Rolf, a much more efficient man for such service than the cripple; Eric and Svein were added to the fourareen's crew, as was needful.

The spray was flying over the rock, and there was a good deal of sea breaking around it.

"I scarce see *how* we're to bring her alongside the bau," Ned muttered to Rolf. "It's very risky."

"It is, but we man get them aff," was the terse, firm reply.

Once, twice they tried to approach so as to allow a man to leap from the boat, but the danger of being capsized was very great, and they hesitated.

At last Lowrie (one of Ned's crew) said, "The dog could swim to us. Ye micht call him; and for the tither—it's no' muckle we can do for *him* noo sae why risk our lives upon *that?*"

They called to the dog, and he quite understood what was wanted of him; but he only barked and looked at them; then turned and licked the hands and face lying wet and white against the tang. His gestures, even the tones of his voice, were so expressive that all saw he was determined to remain by his master and share his fate, and the creature's devotion was so touching that Svein exclaimed—

"Oh, make another try, men! I'm light. *I'll* risk it, and take the jump. I can jump further than any of *you*."

"It would be a sin tae leave sae human-like a craetter for the sea tae make what it likes o' him," quoth Rolf, "and we *will* try again, Maister Svein. Stand by tae loup when I loup. Noo, edge her alang, lads. It can be done, and it *man* be done."

Thus urged and encouraged, the boat approached the skerry once more, and by a deft feat of seamanship was brought so near that Svein, by one bold and vigorous leap, contrived to land. But Rolf could not follow, and the boat was obliged to back off a bit.

A rope was flung to Svein, who soon attached it to the rock. Then a hasty consultation passed between Rolf and Ned, and the plan they proposed to follow was shouted to the lad. "We'll fling anither rope if ye could fix it aboot the body, so that we could pu' *it* aff."

Yes, Svein could do that.

He bent over the corpse, and with reverent and

tender care adjusted the rope, the dog meanwhile watching his movements with jealous attention.

When all was ready Svein gave the signal, and those in the boat, hauling in the line, drew the body from the rock. As it slid into the water the dog, howling piteously, followed, and caught at his master's clothes, evidently afraid that the body would be lost in the sea. But as he saw they were being drawn to the boat his anxiety ceased, and he allowed himself to be pulled along also.

It had been a most difficult thing for Svein to leave the boat for the rock—far more difficult than I have been able to describe. It would be a much more hazardous thing for him to leave the rock for the boat, if he attempted to do so in the same way.

Again and again the fourareen approached, and he stood ready for a leap, but found it impossible to make the attempt, and his patience became exhausted.

"I am not going to stand here for ever like a scarf[1] airing himself on a skerry," muttered Svein to himself; so when the boat, still attached to the rock by a long rope, drew nearer again, he called out, "I'll hold on by the rope, and you haul me on board." Then grasping the rope in both hands he took a bold plunge into the sea, and was dragged from it with the utmost celerity. As he clambered into the fourareen, considerably hurried in so doing by Eric and the collie (the poor creature seemed to think Svein ran a chance of drowning), a

[1] Cormorant.

wild shout rose from the *Tangie's* deck, which was acknowledged by a silent lifting of hats from those in the boat. The inert pathetic form of an old man lying across the thwarts—dead and drowned—prevented any one of that crew from giving expression in words to their exultation at the success attending the adventure.

These fishermen had heard the death-cry of the drowning; they had seen strong men made the toys of a tempest; they had known many a comrade go forth at daydawn, full of lusty life, that never came ashore again. They had held their lives in their hands upon the deep, and were bitterly acquainted with the power of ocean. So their hearts were profoundly stirred by that silent presence in their boat, and more than one hand was furtively passed across a pair of keen yet kindly eyes when Eric Mitchell gently laid the helpless grey head upon a jacket, and drew a piece of it over the face, which the collie was softly licking, as if he still hoped his master would respond to his caress

"Poor old chap!" Svein whispered, patting the faithful creature kindly on the head; "the dog is more to be pitied than if he were a man, for he comprehends nothing more than what he sees and feels. *He* cannot look beyond death."

In silence they rowed back to the yacht, which had remained as stationary as was possible, and were soon all aboard, and surrounded by the rest of the party.

The old man had been recognised as a native of Burra

Isle; and as soon as the Yarl saw the body, he said—"Ah! it's poor old Maunce! Well! I've told him times out of number to be more careful when he goes to 'the craigs.' He must have slipped off the rocks when fishing, and been washed out to the skerries."

The corpse was laid decently aside, and covered with a rug. The dog stationed himself beside it, but did not refuse the comforting meal which Isobel put before him. The Harpers and their comrades were also heartily entertained and recompensed for their assistance. Then the fourareen went her way, steering for Westervoe; and the *Tangie* sped swiftly back to Burrawick.

A great deal of time had of course been spent in this adventure; and though Mr. Garson had satisfied himself, by going to Hovaness and feasting his eyes upon her, that the yacht still swam the seas, the party at Broch were waxing very impatient before she dropped anchor. The hour was very late, and the grey "dim" had drawn its veil about the earth, when our friends came ashore, and were met by the others.

Neither Isobel, nor Fred, could at all understand why the Laird took his daughter tenderly in his arms, and said to Fred in faltering tones—"My son, my dear boy!"

Nor did the Yarl comprehend or appreciate Garth's unusual demonstrations; but he was too much engrossed with the narrative of their adventure to speculate on his son's proceedings.

Old Maunce had no near relatives to mourn his loss. He had lived in a little cottage by himself, and was in the habit of going to "the craigs" (fishing off the crags) or "eela" (evening fishing in small boats near the land) by himself very frequently.

He had been an expert fisherman in his day. In old age he "kent hoo tae handle a rod or line;" but he was often rash, and that rashness had cost him his life at last.

Upon inquiry, Mr. Halsen found that Maunce had been seen to leave his cottage on the previous evening carrying his byödie[1] and sillack-rods, and followed by the collie that was his faithful friend and never-failing companion. He had walked to the crags near Hovaness. Some men had spoken to him as they sailed by, and he sat fishing on the sloping and slippery rocks. Without doubt he had missed his footing, and been carried away by the ebbing tide.

It could only be conjectured what part his dog had played in the tragedy, but the many marks of the animal's teeth upon Maunce's clothes went to show that Watchie had done his best to rescue his master, living or dead, that he had followed the body where the tide bore it, and had probably been instrumental in "landing" it upon the skerry. Svein reported that the marks upon the tang seemed to indicate that the dog had actually dragged the body to the highest part of the rock. This may seem incredible, but was neverthe-

[1] Fishing-basket.

less true, and when it is noted that the dog was a large powerful fellow, and Maunce a shrivelled little old man, the possibility is more apparent.

As I said, Maunce had no near relatives to claim his remains, therefore the body was left that night on board the *Tangie*, with Watchie keeping guard by it, Rolf and Gloy in the little cabin, and Fred Garson's flag drooping half-mast overhead.

CHAPTER XIV.

TIME TO THINK, AND TIME TO PLAY.

THE next morning found all the young folks up early, and alert for adventures new; but some of their schemes were readily made subservient to Mr. Garson's wishes.

"Boys," he said at breakfast, "I am sure you wish with me to show all respect to the dead; and will not mind leaving the *Tangie* where she is till the afternoon."

"I have made arrangements," the Yarl added, "for the funeral to take place about noon, and Mr. Garson and I will attend it. We want the body to be carried straight from the yacht to the kirkyard. What do you say, Captain Fred?"

"Of course we agree," replied Fred promptly. Then glancing at Garth, he added, "I hope you will let us go with you and help lay the poor old man in the earth, Mr. Halsen. Besides we—we would like to do it for—for other reasons." He stammered a good deal, and no one except Garth seemed to understand why Fred Garson's ready tongue had failed him; but at last

it came out. "I've heard from Garth, father," he said, "of the fright you got about us, and though we were in no danger whatever, yet what you feared *might* have happened, and the terrible accident which cost poor old Maunce his life, makes us feel that we owe thanks to God that no accident happened to any of us yesterday. We—that is, Garth said, 'You fellows who are always up to something, and running risks every day, ought to be doubly thankful when you escape mischief,' and so I hope we are, father. At least we want to—to show what we feel."

It was a very lame, and somewhat incoherent speech. It is always so difficult for lads to give expression to deep feeling; but the Laird readily understood his son's meaning.

"I am very sorry," the Yarl remarked, when he saw the bright young faces grow grave as Fred spoke, "that anything should have happened to make your visit to Burra Isle other than a pleasure all round."

"Oh, we don't mind," said Tom Holtum brusquely, a remark which caused Mrs. Mitchell to smile; but Ned Langton added, "We ought to be glad that our yachting expedition was the means of rescuing that noble dog, and of bringing the poor old man's body back."

"It is well," said Mr. Congreve, "that we all should be reminded betimes, yes, even in the midst of our jollity, that the most solemn Presence on earth is ever near us, and that we know not on whom it may fall

first, but that sooner or later its hand will be laid on *all.*"

After such conversation no one felt in the mood for frolics, so when breakfast was over they quietly dispersed, and soon found various occupations congenial to the sober feelings which that shadow of Death had brought.

Fred asked his father to go for a stroll over the hill with him. They were always great chums, that father and son; and it was an evil day for Fred when he had not the restraining hand of paternal love and wisdom for his guide. Garth had explained why the Laird looked so ill, and the words of welcome he had given his children on the previous evening, reminded Fred most touchingly of his position as the only son of his father. He longed to show Mr. Garson how much he appreciated the fond care which he bestowed, so—boy-like—he invited his father to go for a walk! They were soon followed by Isobel and Ned, who were already great friends, as was natural that Fred's sister and "pal" should be; but their alliance was not so pleasing to Eric. He had always looked on Isobel as *his* especial chum, and he resented Ned's encroachment on his rights. However, Isobel was a young lady who brooked no interference with her fancies, so Eric had to see her go off with Ned in the wake of her father and brother; and, for consolation, he betook himself to the moor with Tom and Bill in search of snipe.

Mrs. Mitchell went away by herself to visit Mam Breeta. The Yarl departed to superintend the funeral arrangements; while Mr. Congreve and his daughter, with the Holtum twins, and Harry Mitchell, gave Garth intense delight by insisting upon a minute inspection of his museum and menagerie.

It was when the last-named of the party disappeared within the "Trow's" domain that Svein—hovering in the vicinity of store closets and kitchen—caught Gerta on "household cares intent," and persuaded her that old Beana could manage the housekeeping that morning very well without the assistance of her young mistress.

"I want you to come and gather some flowers, Ta," the youthful diplomatist begged. "There are some old-fashioned beauties in the garden, and I want you to give me some to take home for—madre. You know you ought."

Girls—even girls who take pride in their housekeeping—are not unwilling to desert pie-crust making when a favoured cousin of the male persuasion suggests culling flowers on a summer morning as a duty not less imperative than that of preparing dainties for the table.

Gerta heard Svein and obeyed; and very soon they were sitting on the turf in a quiet corner of the old garden pulling bits of grass, and somewhat forgetful of the purpose which brought them there.

"You are as happy at Broch as if you had never been one of us at Collaster," said Svein, in a distinctly

aggrieved tone. Then with an accent of reproach, "I couldn't have believed it of you, Ta."

"I am not happy," she burst out; "at least, I didn't mean to say *that*. But seeing you all together makes it hard. But, Svein, I told you before why I must stay here and be happy here, and I thought you would understand and would sympathise. I did expect that much from *you*."

"Then you really *are* less happy here?" he answered in a tone of satisfaction. "And you don't really care more for Garth and his dreams than for—for us?"

"I care for Garth and his dreams very much," said Gerta demurely, "and I know *you* care very much for his specimens, Svein, but I never said I liked him more than I liked—Collaster."

"But perhaps you like him more than you like some of your other cousins, eh, Ta?"

"Yes, Trow is nicer than—Tom."

"Of course, I know well enough Garth is *nicer* than most of us," answered Svein honestly, but with some heat. "He is very clever and handsome, I allow—though uncle Hoskuld does not seem to see it—but that's not the point. It is not Garth's niceness I'm on, but whether—oh, well, I suppose it's only what we should expect. A fellow with poet's eyes and golden curls, raving poetry and telling stories as well as if they had been written in a book—of course a plain chap like myself is nowhere beside him—of course not!"

"Svein!" said Gerta, casting her eyes on the ground,

but putting out a timid hand to touch the fingers twitching impatiently at the grasses, "Svein, you *know*, I do not care for any—of my cousins, or, or anybody else, so much as for you. We have always been—been such good—friends, Svein. And, you know, that time you nearly died on Vega—all for sake of my fur cap. I thought I should never—never live, Svein, if you did not get better."

Svein's nervous fingers closed over the small hand so modestly and yet frankly given, and, I am afraid, something very like a youth's first confession of love was near the tip of his tongue at that moment. But, as luck would have it, Mrs. Mitchell and the Yarl approached at that moment, both returning from their errands. They were shortly followed by Mr. Garson and his trio. Then one by one the naturalists came from the museum, and after them the sportsmen. The party was complete, and in fitly subdued mood, when a messenger arrived to say that the coffin, which Mr. Halsen had seen closed on board the yacht, was on the shore.

As the gentlemen left to add themselves to the sorrowful little cortege, Gerta quickly gathered a few flowers, and putting them in Svein's hand, whispered, with tears in her eyes, "From you and me, Svein—lay them on poor old Maunce's grave."

"I understand, dear," said Svein; and after that he never had any more disturbing thoughts about Gerta's residence at Broch.

Watchie had remained all night beside the shrouded form lying under a tarpauling on the *Tangie's* deck. He had sat motionless while Mr. Halsen and others laid old Maunce in the coffin; but when they closed it the dog came nearer and whined piteously, looking into the men's faces with such an anxious, imploring gaze that they were moved to tears.

But the dog was not rebellious or troublesome. He stole quietly into the boat after the coffin, and followed it closely when it was being carried up the shore. He went with it to the kirkyard, and stood quietly beside the open grave, whining now and then, as earth was given back to earth. But when all was over, and the party was preparing to leave, Watchie came silently to where Svein was laying Gerta's flowers on the new-made grave, and gently shoved a cold muzzle into the lad's hand.

"Poor old boy!" Svein whispered, giving the dog the comfort it sought. "Come away with me, Watchie; I'll take care of you, poor old dog!"

The collie understood and followed him; and afterwards, when some other of our young friends begged to have him, Mr. Halsen (who was supposed to have authority to dispose of Watchie) said, "I think we must abide by the collie's own choice. He seems to have attached himself to Svein, so Svein had better have him."

Accordingly Watchie became Svein Holtum's property.

That provoking uncertainty which is characteristic of British weather, and makes it the chief theme of ordinary conversation among Britons, brought mist and drizzling rain on the day following the incidents just described.

There was no pleasure to be had from out-of-door sports, and the proposal of some of the lads to go a-fishing in oilskins was vetoed at once by the young ladies who neither could, nor would, join any such expedition, and were determined that the stay-at-home fun should not be lessened by the absence of any member of the party.

So the boats were left idle in the noost, the *Tangie* with folded wings swung slowly at anchor, and all combined to further host and hostess in their efforts at making "a good time" in the house.

That was not difficult to do where all the guests were good-natured and eager to make the best of everything, where everybody was made to feel at home, and where each individual had resources within him and herself against the invasions of *ennui*.

The ornithologists and geologists had a really "high old time" of it, turning over and re-arranging Garth's admirable collections, but even they were wiled from their hobbies by the sound of sweet music in a remote part of the house.

A famous old fiddler, knowing that a number of gentlefolks were assembled at Broch, had "dropped in" there that evening, well aware that he would be

received with a warm welcome. He always carried his beloved instrument with him when he paid evening visits, and "she" was very soon taken out of her green baize case, tuned, and set to discourse sweet melody.

Of course the lads and lasses were attracted by the sound as flies are attracted to honey. Indeed old Ole' Coutts was wont to declare that when he played the Ferry-reel (fairies' dance) no young person of either sex who heard could possibly refrain from coming near to listen, and mayhap to move blithely in concord with the bewitching strains.

The musician was led from the kitchen, where he had been hospitably entertained by Beana, to the large nondescript apartment which served the purposes of drawing-room, dining-hall, parlour, and study, and there he needed little persuasion to play for the delight of all many strange wild Norse tunes —a kind of melody tabooed as "not classical" in fashionable circles where the music and speech of Celt and Scandinavian must give place to those of Latin and Goth.

But right welcome to the unsophisticated ears of our Shetland friends were those wild lays of the Norland; and Amy Congreve, fresh from London concert rooms, declared that she desired no finer music than that which old Ole' drew from his ancient fiddle.

"That fiddle has a history," Gerta whispered to

Amy. "I think we must coax Trow to repeat his verses about it."

The two girls, backed by Ole' himself, begged so hard that at last modest Garth was obliged to yield, and recited to a most appreciative audience his version of the story which records how Ole's grandfather came to Shetland:—

"From Norwegian stormy mountains
Came a lonely stranger here,
Claiming from his brother Norsemen
Welcome, shelter, home, and cheer.

Gloom was on his careworn forehead,
Sorrow lurked within his eyes,
Breaking heart and bruised spirit,
Sent their echoes in his sighs.

Silent, weary was the wanderer,
Coldly shunning scenes of glee,
Brooding o'er some secret suffering,
Gazing sadly on the sea.

To his side there came a maiden,
In her eyes a dancing light,
Springing step and golden tresses
Shining like the moon at night.

Rapt she gazed upon the mourner,
Old Norwegian lays sang he:
Never had the maiden hearkened
To such plaintive melody.

All the anguish seething in him,
  All the tears he might have wept,
Flowed in melancholy wailings
  From the chords his fingers swept.

And the music of his violin
  Took from grief its keenest sting,
Sole memorial of his country
  Was that loved and lifeless thing,—
Voices speaking to his memory
  Seemed each sweet enthralling string.

Oft the maiden came and listened
  To those warblings wild and rare,
Only with her gentle glances
  Sympathising in his care.

Ne'er a word her sweet lips uttered,
  Ne'er a thought or hope breathed he,
Only with his lays he wooed her,
  Only with her eyes spake she.

Thus she won him from his sorrow,
  Thus he won her maiden heart,
And no more to wild Norwegia
  Did the stranger's feet depart."

"Ye man understand, my dears," said Ole', when the applause attending Garth's recitation had ceased, "that my grandfaither couldna tell the lass what he thocht ony ither way, for he kent no' a wird o' the Shetland tongue. And the lass, puir thing, could say naething

tae him, for the Powers had laid a band upon her mouth, and she was dumb."

It was scarcely possible to refrain from laughing, but fortunately the old fiddler was too much engrossed again with his music to notice the amusement his speech had caused. He played till a late hour, and was warmly thanked. So a rainy day at Broch was happily concluded, and all agreed with Harry Mitchell, who declared "*excitements* are all the jollier when they are sandwiched with *quiet times!*"

CHAPTER XV.

IN SEARCH OF ADVENTURES.

A CLEAR and sunny day promising all sorts of pleasure followed that quiet rainy one, and the lads were up and away very early indeed. When Mr. Garson came down to eight o'clock breakfast he found a very small party at table, and on inquiring the cause was told by Gerta—who had evidently done some violence to her feelings, in consideration of her position of hostess, by being at the post of duty behind the tea service—that the restless young persons had come out of their beds before six, had emptied various plates of scones and jugs of milk, had stuffed ships' biscuits and lumps of cheese into their pockets, and had disappeared in different directions, some by sea and some by land, "just like a flight of crows," Gerta said.

"The Yarl is the wildest boy of them all," Mrs. Mitchell remarked. "At some unearthly hour I heard my boys whistling outside the window, and knowing that signal to mean 'good morning, mother: we're off,' I jumped up to wish them good luck as usual, when who should I see in the middle of the crew but Mr.

Halsen in his sea-rig, and looking up to any amount of mischief! And, you see, the *Tangie* is nowhere!"

"That reminds me," exclaimed Gerta, turning to Mr. Congreve, "to relate a circumstance which will give *you* pleasure, I know. Just when Uncle Hoskuld was standing among the boys, looking, as Mrs. Mitchell says, up to any amount of nonsense, Garth came to him with the most enticing air, and began to plead for leave to turn over a few stones at the Broch sometime. Uncle looked a bit grumpy at first, shook his head, and protested it would be desecration; but Amy and the twins set upon him, repeating a great deal that *you* have said on the subject, and urging him to allow Garth to do as he wished. Then I struck in, and informed the Yarl that some day some one who had less personal interest in the matter, and less reverence for ancestral remains, would come and pull the Broch all to bits, perhaps build pig-sties out of it.

"'Yes, father,' said Trow in his sweetest and most piteous tones, 'when you and I are gone like those old Yarls from whom we have sprung, people who neither knew or cared about us will not leave one stone upon another in their zeal for discovery. Surely it would be better that *I* should bring to light whatever the Broch can show of the story of our forbears.'

"The dear old man was in a very kindly humour, and he could not hold out against us all; so Garth won from him a qualified permission for which he was profoundly grateful."

"I am quite delighted to hear that," said Mr. Congreve; "Garth and I shall set to work on the Broch very soon."

"Have the young ladies gone to sea also?" the Laird asked.

"The twins have, after a fashion," laughed Gerta. "They are down at the Peerie Geo bathing. But Isobel and Amy are differently employed." Then, turning to the scientist with mock solemnity, she added, "It was most impressive to see the manner in which our strong-minded Bluestocking girded herself for a botanising excursion. She wore a deerstalking cap of Trow's, and a leather belt with a spatula hanging from one side, and a sketching-block from the other. Garth carried her vasculum and his own bjüdee,[1] a field-glass and a dredging-net. In short, that couple have evidently gone out Robinson Crusoeing. They were escorted by Fram, so we know there is *one* head of brains in that party."

Everybody laughed, and then Mr. Garson said, "Isobel, I have no doubt, has gone upon another kind of excursion, something quite as energetic, but more daft I should say."

"To be sure," Gerta answered gaily. "She has decoyed that gentle creature Ned Langton into some mad prank; for shortly after Amy and Trow set out, Isobel borrowed our ponies, and she and Ned have gone tearing over the sœters[2] as if riding for a wager. She

[1] Bjüdee, basket of peculiar "make."

[2] Sœters, undulating commons.

had put the poor boy on Chance, and I shall not be surprised if the sober Englisher gets a tumble."

"Too bad of Isobel!" the Laird exclaimed.

"What of the others?" Mr. Congreve inquired.

"Oh, Bill capsized the dingy and himself at the noost, and had to borrow some of Trow's garments before he was fit to join the others. But they are all off with Uncle Hoskuld in the *Tangie*—all except Svein, and he went away to the hills with a gun and Watchie."

"That reflective young gentleman," Mr. Congreve quietly remarked, "probably means to bring in some game for your over-taxed larder, Miss Bruce. Evidently he is the only self-sacrificing member of the early-afoot contingent."

"Yes, Svein *thinks* for one. He knows I wanted some snipe and rabbits badly. That's Svein's way," Gerta replied with the most happy unconsciousness.

"I am afraid," said Mr. Garson, laughing, and addressing the stranger, "that you will find our young folks have a marvellous faculty for creating adventures for themselves. I observe—and I am sure Mrs. Mitchell has had plenty of cause to observe the same thing—that if those lads fail to meet unexpected and startling events, they invent such. The only comfort we poor parents have is that their genius for getting into trouble is equalled by the facility with which they always contrive to extricate themselves."

"They are a stirring set, to be sure! I am glad, however, that Amy has adopted Garth as her boon-

companion, for *he* does not go in for adventure much. They suit each other."

Gerta laughed merrily, and exclaimed, "Oh, Trow is a fraud, I assure you! Just tell him some rare bird has got a nest in the face of some inaccessible cliff, or suggest that arrow-heads may be found at the bottom of a lake, and you will see that Garth Halsen is as wild as the rest of us. I assure you Amy runs as great a risk of adventure in his company as she would if Tom or Bill were her escort."

"And are we," the Laird asked, smiling, and slowly stirring his coffee, "expected to sit quietly in the chimney neuk of Broch while our youngsters are risking life and limb by flood and fell—eh! Miss Gerta?"

"Uncle said I was to tell you that the *Tangie* should be back at noon, in plenty of time to take you home. He said you and Mr. Congreve had arranged a walk to the old kirk this forenoon."

"Perhaps you care to go with us, Mrs. Mitchell," the Laird said politely, but Mrs. Mitchell announced that she had promised her help to Beana in the preparation of some wonderful dishes. Also, that she and Gerta had decided to spend the morning together in the house, and were not to be beguiled from their intention.

Then the arrival of the twins, rosy and hungry, from their sea-bath caused a diversion, and an hour sped quickly in merry talk, till the two gentlemen departed.

When one o'clock arrived the careful little housekeeper had a sumptuous and inviting meal ready for her guests, and at the appointed hour the scattered party began to reassemble. The Laird and scientist returned in company with Svein, whom they met on the hill-side bringing in a well-stocked game-bag. They were shortly followed by Isobel and her cavalier, both in rather subdued spirits, and with mud-stains on their garments. The ponies were wet and dirty to the saddle-girths, and a few questions soon elicited the cause.

In defiance of the sagacious instinct of the ponies Isobel had impetuously urged her steed to cross a bit of swampy ground which *looked* firm enough, but was—as the pony could have told, and did indicate as plainly as was in his power to do—a treacherous quagmire. Ned of course followed the young lady's lead, and in a moment they were floundering in the bog unable to turn back, and in danger of speedy disappearance from the face of the earth. Langton vainly strove to extricate his feet from the stirrups and relieve the pony of his weight, but his legs were helplessly "fixed" and he could do nothing. Isobel was more fortunate, and slipped out of the side-saddle before her feet became entangled in the marsh. With some difficulty she regained the firmer ground, and the pony, left to himself, followed her example. By the time she was in safety Ned and his beast had ceased to struggle, and were slowly sinking in the marsh, the pony snorting but otherwise calm; the lad silent and trying to think

how he was going to be rescued, since effort on his own part only made the position worse.

Isobel stood one moment looking at them, then she said—"Just keep as still as you can, and I'll bring men to help you."

But she did not require to go for help. Some men, crossing the moor at the time, had seen the accident and came promptly, without call, to the rescue, so Ned and his pony were hauled out of their precarious position in a short time. The ponies and their riders were "rubbed down" at a cottage close by, where Isobel gratefully accepted for herself and her companion the offer of a "cup o' tae." After being refreshed by that Shetland panacea they mounted their ponies again, and proceeded on the homeward route.

But their adventures were not ended, for Chance, resenting the method in which he had been forced to go "where he would not," and entertaining scant respect for young Langton's equestrian experience, took advantage of a moment when the rider was off guard.

Stopping short in a quick trot, Chance dropped his head between his forelegs, flung his heels high in the air, and sent Ned turning a somersault in front of his steed. Fortunately this happened on soft turf, and the lad was none the worse, except that he felt somewhat giddy for a few moments.

Chance feeling himself aggrieved, and also at liberty, gave a neigh of triumph, and galloped away, closely

followed, however, by Isobel. After an exciting chase of half an hour she contrived to grasp the rein dangling over the pony's rough mane; and so brought Chance captive to Ned, who had been running up and down in her wake all the time.

Then the couple rode slowly and prudently back to Broch, where their friends had a hearty laugh over the story, a laugh in which the couple joined, I must allow.

"You ought to have known, my lassie," said the Laird, when the laughing subsided, "that Shetland ponies know the ground a great deal better than their riders do. I am sure you must have heard Dr. Holtum say how often he has been indebted to his pony for finding the way home in a dark or misty night."

"Yes," Svein exclaimed, "when father is not sure of the ground, or the path he is on, he just drops the bridle, and leaves the beast to pick its own way. It puts its head down, and sniffs the ground like a dog, and never fails to take a safe and direct road."

"I'll remember all that next time," said Isobel; then added, with a saucy toss of the head, "But the curious thing is, one never does *think* when one ought."

Shortly after Isobel and Ned came the *Tangie* and her merry crew, who were soon ashore telling of the jolly run they had had among the Holmes, and ready to do ample justice to Beana's preparation of Mrs. Mitchell's and Gerta's wonderful dishes.

Amy and Garth did not appear, and the Yarl said it was no use waiting for them. His son was never punctual. His son never cared for anybody or anything when off on a specimen-hunt. His son was a wholly unpractical and foolish young person.

"That's the sort of boy to suit my girl," Mr. Congreve said, laughing good-naturedly, and wishful to say a kind word for poor Garth. "I daresay they get as much pleasure, and profit too, out of their specimens and poetry as we get out of more sordid things, Mr. Halsen."

"Possibly," was the reply. "Anyhow, I hope they will arrive in time to bid our friends good-bye."

But dinner came and went. Cups of tea were sipped in the garden; the sun slanting westward. warned Captain Fred that the day was passing, and he was pledged to land the party in Lunda before Phœbus Apollo touched the horizon, and still Amy and Garth did not return. Mr. Halsen frowned and Mr. Congreve grew restless, as the time for departure drew near and nearer, but did not bring the truants.

"This is very thoughtless of Amy; very," said that young lady's father.

"All Garth's fault," muttered the Yarl.

"Poor children!" laughed Mrs. Mitchell. "I expect they have made some great discovery—a new plant or an antediluvian skeleton. They are pro-

bably sitting at this moment on the top of some ancient cairn, telling each other legends, and completely oblivious to the flight of time, or the existence of anybody besides themselves. Give them my love, Gerta, when they come, and say I hope to hear that they have made themselves famous to-day."

Then the good-byes were said, and the *Tangie* departed for Lunda, but Amy and Garth came not.

CHAPTER XVI.

TREASURE-TROVE.

As Gerta and the two fathers strolled towards the house from the crags where they had bidden their guests adieu, they were met by Fram, who came bounding towards them in a state of great excitement.

"Here's the dog; I suppose the couple have arrived just too late," said Mr. Halsen, and he looked around expecting to see his son, and ready to administer a rebuke; but Garth was not in sight.

"What in the world does the dog mean?" Gerta exclaimed, for Fram was running from one to the other whining, and plainly brimful of some important news which he was anxious to tell without delay. The gentlemen stood still and watched him, and Gerta said, "What is it, Fram? what do you want?"

For answer Fram caught her dress, and gave her a quick but gentle pull, then turned and trotted off a short way, whining as he went, and looking back to see if he were followed. His gestures were most expressive, and his desire so plainly shown that all three moved after him a short way.

When the intelligent creature was satisfied that he had made himself understood, he gave a delighted bark, quickened his pace, and began running up the hill, only looking back now and again to make sure that they were following.

"I fear we are wanted. I fervently trust nothing has happened," said Mr. Congreve, hastening in Fram's wake, but distanced in a minute by Gerta, whose heart gave a great bound as the possibility of a serious accident having taken place presented itself to her mind. She knew Fram's ways better than her uncle did, and she was assured that the dog had not left his master, nor would have acted in such a strange manner if there had not been some unprecedented and urgent cause.

"Don't run so fast, my dear," her uncle called out; "we old chaps can't go at anything like that pace. Take it easy, Gerta, there can't be anything far wrong." Then in an undertone he muttered, "Bother take that boy's nonsense! shouldn't wonder if he's pulled a rock upon himself, or landed the girl in a quicksand!"

All the same Mr. Halsen did not in the least believe that any such horrible thing had happened, and merely grumbled to himself in that fashion to ease his feelings.

As fast as his lame leg would allow he went after Mr. Congreve and Gerta, who were hurrying at the top of their speed after Fram; and so all four, widely apart, hastened over the hill in the direction of the Broch.

"O Amy! what has happened? where is Garth?"—*Page* 147.

As soon as it was evident where Fram was leading them the thoughts of each jumped to the same conclusion. Garth and Amy had promptly acted on the permission given by the Yarl that morning, and had possibly come by an accident in the course of their excavations.

"I knew no good could ever come of disturbing the Broch," Mr. Halsen muttered, as he strove to mend his pace, but was left far in the rear of the active old Englishman, who forgot the courtesy due to his host in anxiety regarding his daughter. Gerta left them both far in her wake, and arrived at the ruin shortly after Fram. There she found Amy reclining on a heap of rubbish, white and languid, but rejoiced out of measure to see a friend's face appear over the broken wall.

"O Amy! what has happened? where is Garth?" Gerta panted, as she clambered over everything, and dropped on her knees beside her friend.

"I hope—I believe Garth is safe still," was the faint reply.

"But where is he? tell me quick."

Miss Congreve pointed to the interior of the ruin, and as she did so, Fram began to scrape violently among the stones and turf, which had evidently been quite recently turned over, and an explanation of the mystery presented itself.

Where a mound of stones and rubbish had been there was a deep depression surrounded by the de-

tached fragments of a very old wall. Evidently Garth's conjectures regarding the Broch had been correct, and it had underground chambers. In disturbing the ruin it had "caved in" to one of these.

"Is Garth down there?" Gerta asked in dismay.

Amy made no reply, but closed her eyes, and then her companion's attention was drawn in part from the lost lad.

"I am afraid you are hurt, dear Amy; what can I do for you? Oh, here is your father. Look up, Amy; try to tell us what is wrong, and—about Garth."

By that time Mr. Congreve was lifting his daughter in his arms, and she did look up, but with a burst of tears.

"Garth is down there," she sobbed; "I could not come to tell you because of my foot. My ankle is badly hurt. At last I thought of sending Fram. Oh! you must begin to dig at once—at once. He is in a little room down there, and I hope he is not hurt. I think he is unhurt and alive, for I heard knocking and stamping for a long time. But it has all been silent since I sent Fram," and she shuddered.

There was a spade lying beside Garth's bjüdee and her vasculum, which Amy explained that they had borrowed from the nearest cottage, and when Mr. Halsen arrived and understood the position of affairs, he seized upon that implement, and commenced to hurl the debris to right and left in a most frantic manner, while Fram, yelping with excitement, con-

tinued to send the earth flying from his paws. There was something tragically ludicrous in the efforts of both—efforts as inefficient as they were absurd.

"Miss Bruce," said the scientist then, "I wish you would run to the hamlet for help, you can go more quickly than I. Bring men and implements, while I attend to this poor child's foot."

Gerta was just starting as directed when the attention of all was arrested by a clear prolonged whistle echoing over the cliffs not far away. The Yarl dropped his spade, and Fram stood at "attention," but Gerta called out joyfully, "That's my Trow's whistle. I know his call to Fram."

And Fram knew it also, for that moment he bounded from the ruin and rushing to the brow of a cliff he began to bark violently, and sniff about for a track of descent.

"Most extraordinary!" ejaculated Mr. Congreve. "The sound proceeds from the cliff, and yet it seemed to come out of the ground also. This is most remarkable."

"I believe I know what it means," said Mr. Halsen. "Tradition has it that there was a passage from the Broch to the sea. Possibly my poor boy has found that way of escape."

"That is certainly the explanation," answered the scientist, "and it should relieve us of our chief anxiety regarding our young friend. But how are we going to get him up from there? The cliff is smooth and overhanging."

By that time they had followed Fram, and were craning their necks to see over the precipice, but all in vain. They could not see Garth, they could only hear his continuous whistling.

"I suppose he could not hear us shouting?" Mr. Congreve asked.

"But we *must* let the boy know some one is at hand to help," said the Yarl, and clubbing his hands together over his mouth he "blew a blast baith loud and strang," which Garth evidently heard and understood, for his answering whistle was quite unlike his dog-call, and was interpreted to his father's satisfaction.

The next point was to ascertain how the lad could best be rescued. Digging a way through the Broch was obviously too tedious and too dangerous. The rocks overhung too much for any one to descend even with the use of a rope: and it was soon determined that a boat must go round to the foot of the cliffs, from whence it might be possible to climb up to Garth. Indeed the place where he was might not be much above sea-level. Anyhow from the sea only could rescue come.

While the gentlemen were consulting, and Gerta was back with Amy, who could not move herself, Fram, satisfied that the precipice afforded no path by which he might descend to his master, ran swiftly to a lower part of the shore, made his way from crag to crag till he reached the sea margin, and then swam along the foot of the cliff till he disappeared in the vicinity of its overhanging portions.

Gerta was despatched to the nearest hamlet to bring assistance for Amy, and Mr. Halsen set off in the same direction that Fram had taken, for a little way further along the shore there was a small fishing-station, and there a boat could be got. Mr. Congreve remained with his daughter. Before Mr. Halsen had gone very far his attention was attracted to the *Tangie* running past the North Ness just then, and somewhat off her course to Blaesound. The old gentleman stopped short, and got out his spyglass, muttering at the same time. "The quickest course to Lunda is not by coasting Burra Isle—what's up? Now I shouldn't wonder if Garth is throwing out some signal, and that sharp lad Fred has seen it. What luck that would be!"

Very soon it was obvious that keen eyes on board the yacht *had* been arrested by something unusual at the cliffs, and that the *Tangie* was coming along to investigate.

"She'll be abreast of us in a jiffy. I needn't go after boats or men now," soliloquised the Yarl. "They'll send the dingy, and if anybody *can* reach my poor laddie and bring him home safe, it's Mr. Garson and the lads of Lunda who will do it."

As the sloop neared the spot it was evident that all on board were in a great state of excitement, which, we may be sure, was equalled by that of their friends on shore. She lay-to opposite the spot from whence Garth's signal had come, and her dingy put off at once, and was rowed quickly inshore till it disappeared be-

neath that provoking cliff. The boat was not long out of sight, though the time seemed an age to those watching above; and when she was far enough from the rocks to allow those overhead to have a good view of her, they were satisfied that a rescue had been successfully managed. When the dingy left the sloop she held two persons, Mr. Garson and Svein Holtum; when she drew away from the shadow of the cliff there were three souls on board, and Fram standing up in the bow yelping like mad.

The dingy rowed slowly along shore till she reached a place where a landing could be easily made, where indeed Mr. Halsen had stationed himself, trying hard to look stern, but rejoicing at heart over his son's safety. He was shortly joined by Gerta and Mr. Congreve, and Amy mounted on a pony, which had been "bended" for the purpose, and which she found more comfortable for her sprained foot than a saddle. Two or three cottagers had offered their services willingly, and were of the party.

When the boat touched Mr. Garson stood up, lifting with some difficulty two large and heavy bundles, and saying to the Yarl, "Come and help your young hero on shore, while I land his plunder. The boy is exhausted."

Eager hands helped Garth along, and when he stood on the sward Mr. Garson dropped the bundle at his feet, and said, "I'll leave you to tell your own story. We must be off at once if we are to reach home before midnight." Then, as he shook hands with the Yarl, he

said in a low voice, "I am sure, under the circumstances, you will be very tender with your boy. I fancy he is a bit afraid that you may disapprove of what he has done, and his nerves have got a considerable shaking. I told him you could only be pleased."

Neither the Laird nor Svein thought of inquiring why Amy was sitting on a "bended" horse, nor why she had failed to report Garth's predicament at Broch. They were in a hurry to be off, and in a short time were once more on board the *Tangie.*

Garth meanwhile had sank down on a boulder with the bundles at his feet, and Fram sniffing suspiciously around them. The lad's thoughts were too much engrossed for him to ask a question. He forgot how long he had waited for succour, forgot his wonder that Amy had not given the alarm, forgot to inquire what had happened to her, indeed it never had occurred to him that she could have come by an accident. He had left her safe on *terra firma;* he seemed half-dazed, and as if he scarcely knew what had happened, or was happening.

"Whatever have you got there wrapped up in your jacket, Trow?" Gerta asked.

He looked at his father with an appeal in his eyes, and then with trembling hands undid the covering from his treasure-trove and said simply—"I have found our Viking's hidden spoil."

There it lay, a glittering heap of gold and silver ornaments, vessels, coins, weapons—the spoil, no doubt, of many a ruthless foray. Rings and bracelets torn

from helpless women, costly chalices robbed from holy shrines, money levied as blackmail from terrified peasants, swords and battle-axes won in victorious fight,—Yarl Hoskuld's long-hidden treasure found at last! The two men stood and gaped at the amazing spectacle, and Gerta, forgetting delight and surprise in her loving sympathy with Garth, hung about him with a shower of pretty speeches which he took with philosophic calm.

"Didn't I say he was a Trow!" she exclaimed. "Who but a Trow could have gone into the heart of the earth and brought up that treasure?"

Then the gentlemen went on their knees to inspect the "find," which Mr. Congreve was not long in declaring to be a most valuable one from a pecuniary, as well as antiquarian, point of view; and Mr. Halsen forgot in natural pleasure his indignant prohibition, issued when Garth first ventured to suggest meddling with the Broch!

"There are other things down there, father," said Garth, "but they were too heavy for me to manage. They are not so valuable from the ordinary point of view, and seem made chiefly of bronze and copper; but they are beautiful—some of the jars are exquisitely shaped and carved. And the place itself is wonderful down there."

"We are not all Trows, my lad," answered the Yarl, "so perhaps you will enlighten us as to what 'down there' may be."

"It's a sort of cave, very small, and it opens a little way above the high-water mark, but there are some crags rise in front of the opening which protect it from the waves and from observation."

"And how in the world did you get 'down there'?"

"The Broch fell in, you know."

"Yes, we know that; but how did you get out?"

"After we found the first chamber, I thought Amy had better rest above while I did some more grubbing. I found two or three steps leading down into a wee room that was not quite dark. Into that I went, and I was just going to call to Amy to come and see my latest discovery, when I heard a tremendous raab[1] overhead, which I soon found was the tumbling in of the upper story. Some large stones fell over the steps I had come down, and completely blocked up the way. I was not in darkness, however, and I soon found that there was an opening leading downwards.

"This opening had got choked a bit with mud, but I shovelled that away, until I made the opening large enough for me to crawl through. It led into a long narrow passage, and there seemed nothing at the far end of it but the sea. It was like crawling through a telescope."

He stopped there. Evidently Garth's recollections of that passage were not pleasant.

[1] Raab, the noise caused by the sudden fall of a quantity of stones or rocks, or a wall.

"That tunnel," he resumed, "ends in a small cave, and there I sat for I can't tell how long, wondering what would happen next, when it occurred to me to explore a little, and the result was I found the treasure hid in a corner with large stones piled around it.

"I must have spent a long time over it—I don't know. I began to wonder when Amy would bring you to the Broch, and how long it would take to dig me out; then I perched myself on one of the crags, hoping to attract the attention of some passing boat. I fastened my handkerchief to the end of the spade, which I had managed to drag with me, and stuck it up as a signal. It was not till long after that I thought of whistling. Between time spent in whistlings and sittings on the rock like a cormorant, I brought out these things, and did them up in my jacket and handkerchief. It has seemed a long time—a long time."

"Garth, did you have any food in your pockets?" Gerta asked suddenly, as she saw his face grow paler.

"It was all in the vasculum," Amy exclaimed. "*I* was glad enough to apply to our sandwiches while I lay up there on the ruin, but poor Garth has had nothing since six o'clock this morning."

"No wonder he is white, and half dead," Garth's father exclaimed, and at once despatched one of the peasants to the nearest cottage for milk and bread,

which were soon brought, and gratefully enjoyed by the famishing lad. But in spite of the refreshment, Garth—constitutionally delicate—collapsed very much, and it was found necessary to procure a second pony for his use.

The treasure-trove was stowed in the "maischies" depending from the "clibbers" of the ponies, and then the whole party returned to Burrawick.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE SHADOW THAT SUBDUES.

THE heavier portion of the treasure-trove was with some difficulty removed by boat from the cavern on the next day. Mr. Congreve spent many blissful hours examining it in detail, and taking notes for the information of the scientific world; while the Yarl employed himself in making most exhaustive investigations of the Broch, so that no pretence for further or later excavations should be left.

But poor Garth was quite incapacitated from sharing in either the scientist's delighted study or his father's respectful stirring of dead ashes.

A few days of rest set Amy on her feet again, none the worse for *her* adventure, but it was different with the boy. Excitement, fatigue, and a long fast, combined with a chill caught through waiting so long in the damp cave, and the indiscretion (produced through zeal for science) of removing his jacket, had been too much for the sensitive nerves and delicate constitution, and the result was a bad attack of rheumatic fever.

Great was the concern of all at Collaster, a few days

after these adventures took place, when Dr. Holtum received the following letter from Gerta:—

"DEAREST UNCLE,—I wish you to come and see Garth. Svein would tell you of my poor Trow's adventure at the Broch. He has been in bed ever since we brought him home, and he gets worse, I am sure, every hour. Though he tries not to let us see his pain I know he *is* suffering fearfully, and Mr. Congreve thinks as I do that you are urgently wanted here. Oh, you can't think, dear uncle, how sad I am at sight of his poor white, wistful face, and his quiet uncomplaining ways. He seems to have lost interest in everything. This morning Amy brought in a rare kind of plant, which she and Garth had sought in vain many times. She brought it to him thinking he would be so pleased, but he scarcely looked at it: and by *that* I know he is far more ill than appears. Uncle Hoskuld only laughs at me when I tell him what I believe is the truth. He says we girls are making a 'molly-coddle' of Garth, and he declared we had infected Mr. Congreve with our foolish fears, when *he* looked grave after being in Garth's room. All the same, Uncle Hoskuld gave me permission to send this letter to you, and I do hope you will come soon.

"I hope everybody is well at Collaster, and the boys enjoying themselves as usual. I suppose they will be coming soon to see the beautiful things Trow found,

and I hope when they come that he will be well enough to act showman. I am sure when he is in *your* hands he will be all right. Love to everybody, from your own

"GERTA."

"Poor laddie! poor Garth!" said Mrs. Holtum sympathetically. She had always felt great pity for the lonely, neglected boy, and regretted that circumstances had prevented her from taking him into her motherly care as she could have wished.

"You will go to Burra Isle at once, I suppose?"

"Certainly," the doctor replied. "Have you any idea where the *Tangie* may be at this precise time, because if she is anywhere within hail I'd get the lads to run across with me?"

"Svein told us yesterday, when he left for the Ha', that they were going round to Whaalaire if the sea kept smooth. The barque has completely broken up, and a good deal of wreckage is floating about, I believe."

"Those boys have the old pirate instinct strong," the doctor remarked with a smile. "However, I daresay they will not object to leaving their fun for my purpose. Nye, dear" (addressing one of the twins), "get your saddle on Aster and ride over the hill to Whaalaire. If the *Tangie* is off there some of the boys may be on shore, or within hail, and you can let them know what I want. Ask them to bring the sloop to the mouth of the voe where I will meet

them in the whillie. Now let me see how quick you can be, my child."

Off ran Nye, and before many minutes she was riding full speed across the common, while her father was rapidly making his arrangements for departure.

Kate was despatched to find two youths to "man" the whillie, and have it ready at the quay; and as soon as Dr. Holtum had finished with the professional duties which demanded attention that morning, he found his little boat waiting for him.

Meanwhile Nye had executed her commission with the utmost despatch. When she reached Whaalaire she found that the *Tangie* was lying off the Voders, and some of the lads in their dingy were investigating those rocks, and picking up wreckage as zealously as if their living depended upon it!

The girl signalled them by a "cooee" which every Lunda lad knew, and the dingy came in shore at once. The contents of Gerta's letter were told, and the doctor's request delivered, and we may be sure no one of the *Tangie's* crew demurred at leaving their sport for such an errand. Fred Garson was in the dingy, and it was he who (as "chief") most fittingly sent back reply. "Tell the doctor we are at his service, and the *Tangie* shall be at the mouth of your voe when he wants her. Put Aster through his paces, Nye, else the Yarl's yacht will be at Collaster before you."

So when the whillie arrived outside the voe of Collaster our "fairy-bark" was there waiting for Dr.

Holtum, and as soon as he came on board she was off on a free course to Burra Isle, the foam tossing merrily around her, her white wings fully spread and steady as those of an osprey when he soars in contemplation after a satisfactory meal, and her generous "company" glad to urge her on such a mission.

Gerta's heart leapt with joy when she saw the *Tangie* come to its old anchorage, for she knew that Dr. Holtum had instantly responded to her call, and by that time even the Yarl was ready to admit that a physician was required. Garth scarcely opened his languid eyes when the doctor bent tenderly over him and said, in the low, cheerful voice which doctors use and find so helpful—"Well, laddie, is *this* the way a Viking brings home his spoil?"

The shadow of a smile flickered about the boy's lips, to be instantly strangled in a spasm of pain, and the doctor's grave face grew graver still. He asked no further questions, and his examination of the patient was very brief; but when he came downstairs, every one saw that he had no doubts regarding the nature of the illness, and that it was a serious one.

Mr. Congreve was the first to ask an opinion. "I am afraid, doctor," he said, "you find our young friend very poorly?"

"He is very ill;—I fear rheumatic fever—and possibly complications—he has been growing fast, and there is also extreme nervous prostration. He will require tender nursing, as well as vigilant care."

Dr. Holtum's words were intended for the Yarl, though all heard them. The doctor had never judged Hoskuld Halsen as truly and gently as his wife had done, and was always stern in denouncing what he called the "indolent negligence" which had left Garth to "grow," like Topsy, without mental or physical education. The doctor hoped that a sharp alarm might wake the father to a sense of his shortcomings; therefore, there was no mincing of words, no abating of truth, in the professional announcement that Garth was desperately ill.

Certainly, Dr. Holtum's object was gained, for the poor old Yarl broke down all at once when the fact was stated.

"Poor little chap!" he cried out, "I haven't been as good to him as some of you men who are wiser in such things would have been, but I love my poor boy. He is all I have in the world. My poor little Garth!"

"He isn't so little, Uncle Hoskuld," said Gerta, putting her arms round his neck, and softly kissing the rough cheek, over which tears were heavily falling. "Garth is far more of a man than any one knows—though he looks so slight, and fair, and shrinking, and he will get better, please God. And, uncle, dear, you have *me*, you know, as well as Trow, and he and I both love *you* dearly."

The Yarl stroked her hair, but did not answer her. He turned to the doctor and asked in broken tones, "What can we do? tell me what I must do to save him?"

"First and foremost he must have an experienced nurse. I don't underrate Miss Congreve and Gerta's powers in that way, nor the wisdom of old Beana, nor your own willingness, Halsen, but I must put our patient in abler hands, so if you please send at once for Mam-Breeta."

The doctor was obliged to return to Lunda that evening, for other patients as ill as Garth needed him; so he left many and precise directions with Gerta as to the management of the patient, fully assured that his capable young niece would see his orders strictly enforced. The Yarl was of no use in the crisis whatever, and Dr. Holtum could not think of burdening the guests at Broch with any part of the nursing, though both father and daughter had identified themselves with the family, were sharing its anxiety, and eager to be of use.

"I think," said Fred to Miss Congreve, when the "situation" was plainly accepted, "that you and your father had better ship with me, and take up your abode at the Ha' till Garth mends. My people, you know, expect you to visit them whenever you care to come, and will be delighted how soon you make it. It will be slow for you here while that poor chap is ill."

"A good idea, Fred," said the doctor; and turning to Mr. Congreve, he added, "You can't take Mrs. Garson by surprise, and I strongly second Captain Fred's proposal."

But Amy shook her head, even though she saw that

her father was willing to adopt the plan. He felt that perhaps they would be a little *de trop* at Broch while sickness was there, but she knew better, as far as her own self was concerned.

"I think you should accept the kind invitation, father," she said, "but please leave me here. I know Gerta needs me—if for nothing more than company—and I could not be happy anywhere out of Broch while Garth is ill."

After some further debating on the subject it was at last agreed that Mr. Congreve should go with the *Tangie*, leaving Amy to give her time and sympathy to the troubled household.

Dr. Holtum promised to return in a couple of days, and Fred eagerly volunteered to keep his craft in readiness to perform whatever services might be required. The Yarl had absented himself from the consultations, and was supposed to have retired to his Crow's-nest; but when Dr. Holtum went up to bid his patient good-bye, and promise a speedy return, he found the father sitting beside Garth's bed, adding greatly to the invalid's pain by eager questions, and unwonted caresses, which were as pathetic as ill-timed.

It was not easy to explain to a man like old Halsen that such action must do more harm than good; but fortunately the arrival of Mam-Breeta set all square. In her douce black dress and white cap, with her quiet respectful manner, Breeta looked the beau ideal of a motherly nurse; and when she went up to the bed and

took the boy as gently as if he were a new-born infant to her breast, murmuring, "My ain sweet bairn! The Lord bless thee, and keep thee!" Dr. Holtum knew that Garth would have the right kind of nursing.

"Mam-Breeta!" the boy whispered, turning his face with utmost satisfaction to the motherly bosom that had been the refuge of his worse than parentless childhood, "Mam-Breeta, stay with me, and pray to God for me."

The doctor, laying his hand on Mr. Halsen's arm, drew him from the room, and they went downstairs together to find Mr. Congreve "far through" with his preparations for a hurried departure, and Fred jubilant over his smart capture of the scientist.

Mr. Halsen went down to the shore to see the party off; but Gerta and Amy stood together at the window, and silently watched the yacht glide out to sea, while the Yarl disappeared in the vicinity of his Crow's-nest. How long the girls might have remained so I cannot tell; but as they stood, Fram came close to Gerta and put his nose into her hand. She looked down at the dog, and he looked up at her, each reading the thought of each by a power more eloquent than any words; then Gerta burst into tears, and sobbing out, "My poor Trow! my own dear boy, Garth!" she flung herself into Amy's arms, and the pair of them had a comfortable "cry" together in the hümien (twilight); while overhead Mam-Breeta's soft and quivering voice was singing Garth to rest with the sweet old hymn—

"'Art thou weary, art thou languid,
Art thou sore distrest?
Come to me,' saith One, 'and coming,
Be at rest.'"

The window of Garth's room was open, and the holy, soothing song was carried out upon the evening air and borne to the Yarl, where he sat in his high tower musing sorrowfully and with remorse over wasted opportunities of doing his duty by Garth, and drawing to himself the loving confidence of his only child.

Because the boy was not a reflection of himself he had treated him with a sort of contemptuous pity, had been careless of his best interests, had discouraged his high hopes, and resented his want of boisterous life as if nothing else was required for the "making of a man" but physical power and animal activity.

He had never realised his responsibilities as a father, and had never known how dear to his soul was that one silent, gentle son, until death's shadow lay upon the boy. No more had he comprehended his own position as the son of an Almighty Father till paternal yearning woke in his heart to active existence; and that sacred lullaby came to him then as a voice divine calling his troubled spirit to find peace. So Mam-Breeta's singing brought sleep to her suffering "bairn," and rest of mind to the Yarl.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CHEERS AND AMENS.

It would be somewhat tedious and serve no purpose to go over at any length the sad weeks which followed, while Garth Halsen lay within the shades of death.

Again and again the *Tangie* came on her errand of mercy, bringing Dr. Holtum to minister to the sufferer, and to cheer the girls with hopeful words. One or other of the lads would come on shore, and spend a few hours at Broch; but, with great good sense and feeling, they abstained from visiting "in a body," after their usual custom; so that the house was always hushed and mirthless during those sorrowful days.

Mam-Breeta was certainly a queen of sick nurses, and the tenderest of mothers. In her youth she had spent a number of years in Edinburgh as attendant on an invalid lady; and it was then that she acquired not only the art of sick-nursing, but the Christian characteristics which had been of much service to her foster-son, and an intimate acquaintance with the hymnology, which frequently is as useful as opiates

in soothing and comforting the sick. All her skill and attention, we may be sure, were exerted in Garth's behalf; but she could not be with him always, and when she was obliged to retire for sleep or rest, the girls were ready to take her place. Amy was a deft manufacturer of jellies and such condiments as doctors prescribe for their patients; and often Garth was tempted to eat what her hands had prepared just because her hands had done it, not because he wanted to eat.

Gerta kept his room tidy and fragrant. She always had a few fresh flowers standing near to catch his eye when he was quiet enough to think of anything beyond the pain which tortured him; and sometimes she would bring Fram up to look at his master.

Mr. Halsen seldom left the neighbourhood of his boy's room, but he did not often enter it, and seldom stayed more than a few minutes when he did. There was, however, a new, sympathetic tenderness in his manner which did not escape Garth's attention, ill as he was; and once the eyes of father and son met in a gaze of mutual "understanding," such as they had never before experienced, and which thrilled to the soul of each. No words were spoken. The old man laid his big, brown, masculine hand, with a sort of timid pleading, upon the thin white fingers, racked by pain, girlish in form, weak and weary; and Garth feebly slipped his other hand upon the one

which his father held. Poor, worn, sensitive hands! Both together were a small fistful for the Yarl, and he held them as tenderly as if they were rose leaves.

There was never any need after that for any explanation, any reviewing of past mistakes, any promising for the future, any expression of regret, any assurance of affection;—Garth felt, and Mr. Halsen felt, that they were in the right position towards each other at last.

"Something has happened," Gerta whispered once to Amy; "I don't know what it is, but it's something right and nice, and it's made Uncle Hoskuld and Trow chums—like the Laird and Fred have always been, and like you and your father are. I am awfully glad, for it used to vex me often the way they used to rub each other the wrong way—though *Garth* never meant it, I knew."

"If poor Garth's illness has brought him and his father into a closer and better relationship," said Amy, "it has served the best purpose possible."

"Yes—if he recovers," Gerta sighed.

For a long time that recovery was extremely doubtful; but when the long vacation was drawing to its close, and the lads of Lunda were preparing to part again, Dr. Holtum said, on the *Tangie's* deck one day—"Well, boys, I know you will be glad to hear at last that I consider the poor laddie out of danger now."

They set up a wild cheer, and tossed their caps into

the air with such heartiness that out of eight which went up only three returned to their owners, the rest floated away on the wind, and dropped here and there into the sea. The yacht was, at the time, running out of Burrawick at a good rate; but heedless of that, and anxious to display his remarkable talent (only lately acquired, be it said) for swimming, Bill Mitchell took a header into the fiord, and was soon engaged in collecting straw hats and cricket caps floating in the *Tangie's* wake.

"You idiot!" his brother Eric shouted, as Bill's heels disappeared over the side; and "The boy is mad!" exclaimed Dr. Holtum at the same moment.

Harry Mitchell, with his usual quick wit, ran aft and flung a life-buoy after Bill. Then Watchie, alert, and sure that it must be a case for rescue, plunged overboard, and struck out for the scapegrace who had been speedily made aware of his own folly, the danger of his position, and his need of help.

Before he had been many minutes in the water, or secured more than two hats and one cap, he discovered that a strong current was carrying him rapidly away from the sloop, though she had tacked as quickly as possible, and would soon be coming after him.

Fortunately for Bill the same current swept Watchie and the life-buoy in the same direction as himself, and he was extremely thankful when the dog reached him and he could grasp the noble creature's shaggy coat. As soon as Watchie felt Bill's hands on him he made

for the life-buoy, and on it the foolish lad rested until the dingy, which Fred had sent, reached the spot.

"You really deserve a good thrashing," were the words with which Eric greeted the delinquent when he arrived on deck again; but even Eric could not forbear laughing when Bill held up the sailor's hat, which had been his eldest brother's property, and humbly said—"I got your hat anyhow, Eric."

The lads kept extra garments on board, and Captain Fred was not a rigid disciplinarian, so Bill was able to discard his wet clothes without being reduced to a rope's-end and tarpaulin. Dr. Holtum saw he had got a good fright, and wisely withheld the lecture Bill deserved till a more befitting season.

There actually came a day when the doctor gave permission to Fred, Eric, and Svein to pay a short farewell visit to the sick-room. Ned Langton had been one of the privileged few who were allowed to see Garth frequently during his illness, and he was with the invalid when our 'Varsity men were admitted to say good-bye.

As the young fellows, bronzed and robust from their two months' yachting, full of animal life and high spirits, stood beside the wasted, wan creature just returned from the gate of death, Ned said to them—"We don't thank God enough for healthy bodies. What a picture of health you three look! It never struck me so much as at this moment, that health is the first of all earthly blessings."

"Right you are," said Fred, and Svein added—"We may have forgotten to be thankful on our own accounts, but we haven't been so about this poor old chap. Garth, boy, I can't tell you how pleased I am to see you again. We could not have gone back to our work with any heart if you hadn't been round the corner. But father says you're sure to be all right soon now."

"I have a heap to be thankful for," said Garth in a faint voice, that brought a lump to more than one throat in the room.

"We'll all be jolly together again next year, please God," said Ned. "The Laird has made me promise to return with Fred, so you and I, Garth, will have some more quiet 'talks' when that time comes."

When they had all bidden "good-bye," and returned to the yacht, Amy came into Garth's room, and said—"I want you to listen hard, for when the *Tangie* is under weigh, those lads are going to give three good cheers for you, and I promised that when you heard them I should wave a white signal from your window. I've got a good big one ready," and she held up a table-cloth before Garth's eyes to his great amusement.

They were silent for a few minutes, listening intently, till the loud and hearty cheers from the yacht were wafted ashore; then Amy darted to the window, and hung out her table-cloth. This stimulated the lads to further demonstrations, and cheer after cheer came

from the *Tangie* till she was some way on her course. Then Garth said, "That puts new life into me, those fellows are so very much alive!"

"I suppose you know that Mrs. Mitchell and the girls are going to escort their heroes to Lerwick on Monday?" Amy remarked; then sighed, and added, "And I suppose *I* shall have to be thinking of flight too ere long."

"It has been most good of Mr. Congreve to do his touring with the Laird of Lunda in your place, and it has been goodest of all in you to stay here," said Garth, lifting his soft blue eyes to Amy's face with the deepest gratitude in them. "I wonder what Broch will feel like when you have left it," he added.

If these two had only known the plan which their respective fathers were concocting at that moment they would not have felt so serious or looked so forlorn at thought of the near future.

Mr. Congreve had returned to Broch that day, and while Amy was keeping guard over the invalid the scientist and Yarl were strolling along the shore in earnest conversation.

"I suppose you *must* go soon?" Mr. Halsen said. "I can't tell you how sorry I am that my poor boy's illness cut short your visit to us."

"Oh," answered the other, laughing, "it gives me an excuse for repeating my visit soon. But I really must be off in a week or two. I am 'booked' for lectures, and no end of things, during the winter. And then

there is that remarkable treasure-trove. I am impatient as can be to tell all about it to my colleagues. Yes, I shall have a busy time when I get back to London."

"How does your daughter employ herself when you are engaged in scientific pursuits? I think you said you had no fixed residence."

"Ah! that is my difficulty. I am often sorry for Amy. The only *home* she has known was her school. Her mother died when she was an infant, and I never could bear to settle down in a house of my own after that. I found relief from sorrow in scientific pursuits and gave myself up to them. My girl was taken charge of by friends of mine who kept a school, and she lived there—except when travelling in holiday time with me—till I believed she had received enough of feminine instruction, and could be better educated by myself; but sometimes I think she needs home-life more than 'higher education.'"

"She has very domestic ways for so clever a lass," said the Yarl, who was sceptical regarding the possibility of scientific and housewifely talents being combined in one feminine person. "My boy says her jellies beat Mrs. Garson's hollow; and Gerta thinks—— I don't know how Gerta is going to let Amy go. I fear it was rather selfish of me to bring Gerta to Broch."

"Mr. Halsen, I wish you would allow me to leave my daughter in your care for the ensuing winter," Mr. Congreve said quite suddenly, and the Yarl was very much surprised by the abrupt proposal.

"Allow you!" he exclaimed, "why I could desire nothing better for Gerta, and for my son. As for my 'care,' that is nonsense. She looks after me and after everybody, I think. But what I can do I will with delight, only—what does *she* say to such a plan?"

"She does not know of it, but I know Amy will gladly agree. I have thought of this more than once, I assure you; but did not like to mention it, lest you might think me somewhat presuming on your hospitality. Let me explain my position a little more fully. I shall be greatly occupied during the ensuing winter with scientific pursuits, and Amy will see very little of me. I am sure she would be happier here than with any friends she has in England. Also your climate seems to suit her better than any other place she has lived in. Then I think her society should be a benefit to your niece, and I know her sympathy and knowledge will be of infinite service to that fine boy of yours. I want to come down to Shetland in May, and do some North Sea dredging; and my covetous eyes have been set upon your little yacht. She would suit my purpose exactly, and Mr. Garson suggested that if I spoke in time I might secure the *Tangie* before you make any arrangement for her disposal next season. Now what do you say to my scheme 'in the rough,' Mr. Halsen?"

The old gentleman's eyes sparkled with delight, and he grasped his companion's hand.

"It's a bargain, sir," he exclaimed. "You may have

my yacht, and my house, and my island, and myself, if you give your daughter to us till your return. I know, perhaps better than even you can guess, what her company will be to my young folks, and I can never thank you enough."

"Then we'll settle it so," Mr. Congreve replied. "I am well assured of Amy's willing consent."

He talked the matter over with his daughter next morning, and found that she was very ready to fall in with his wishes when she knew that she was not likely to have much of her father's society during the winter, and that his movements would be somewhat hampered by thought of her sharing the least agreeable portions of his unconventional mode of life. But when he said, "I shall join you here in spring, to spend the whole summer and autumn in Shetland, my dear," Amy gave joyful assent to the whole scheme, and Mr. Congreve's heart was relieved of a pressing anxiety.

CHAPTER XIX.

UNDER WEIGH.

I SHOULD perhaps explain here why Miss Gerta Bruce, that all-important member of the Broch household, did not participate in any of these plans, plots, and discussions. Now that Garth was so far recovered, his attendants were not required to keep such close watch over him, and Svein Holtum—finding excuse in Gerta's fagged appearance—persuaded his father to carry the girl off for a brief visit to Collaster before the vacation was ended.

Amy had seconded the proposal, and promised to perform her friend's household duties faithfully in her absence; and, as it was true enough that Gerta had broken down a little under the strain of that long period of nursing, the greater share of which she had borne, she allowed herself to be persuaded into "running away" for a few days.

It is a matter of fact that Mrs. Holtum had missed from her eldest son's face a certain look of content which had been there before he left home to begin the battle of life, and his mother wondered what had taken

from Svein's countenance one of its most pleasing characteristics. She was afraid that college life was not quite "so jolly" in reality as the lad affirmed, and she hoped that home, his *old* mode of life, and the yacht would restore the "lost charm," but they didn't.

What was her astonishment to find, when the lads returned from their farewell visit to Burra Isle, bringing Gerta with them, that Svein was himself again—nothing that had made his frank face pleasant to look upon in the olden time was wanting, and even the twins were alive to the difference.

"Why, Svein," Kate exclaimed, "what's happened to you?"

"Goodness me, Svein," Nye called out, "your face is actually shining as if you had greased it with seal-oil."

"Tuts, twinikins!" said Tom, laughing boisterously, "you don't know nothing! It's Gerta that's 'happened' to Svein, and it's the butter she has been giving him that makes his face shine."

Fortunately for Tom, Svein was beyond hearing, having run out to find Crawbie that *he* might welcome Gerta, like everybody else; but Mrs. Holtum heard, and her eyes were opened.

"Hush, Tom, you foolish, heedless creature," she said quickly, "I must have no jokes of that sort. Take care, girls, and never think of repeating such a thing. Mind, I trust you all three to obey me in this. You should be more careful what you say, Tom. I fear that tongue of yours will get you into heavy trouble some

day. But I know, my boy, you have kindly feelings, and would not wound your brother, or cause Gerta to feel uncomfortable, for anything; so I am sure you will be more guarded in what you say."

Tom was considerably taken aback by his mother's reproof, but he promised to keep her caution in mind, and then he went away pensively whistling—

"My love she's but a lassie yet."

It was quite true (what Harry Mitchell had remarked on an occasion when Tom and he were patching up a truce) that "Tom isn't such a fool as he looks."

Tom's air of simplicity, though by no means assumed, did not do justice to his penetration, which was 'cute, if blundering at times.

But ere that brief visit to Gerta's former home was over, a good many people besides Tom and his mother began to see that the child-preference which Svein and Gerta had always shown for each other, was rapidly forming itself into the sweet unselfish love of young man and maiden; and with that fine sense of "the correct thing," which had been born with the lads of Lunda, they forbore to make any remarks. Not once was Svein chaffed on the subject. Not even Isobel was tempted to joke when the young couple drew a little aside from their companions, quite unconscious that their doing so was matter of comment.

"The children grow up so fast—so extremely fast!" Mrs. Holtum said to the doctor with a sigh. "It

seems but yesterday when I received Gerta a baby-orphan, and Svein was just toddling out of his cradle: and now—there they are, grown up and sweet-hearting!"

"If I do not mistake, madame," answered her husband, with a smile, "you were not much older than your niece when you began that same sweethearting with an old school-companion, another Svein! We can't blame our children for doing as we did, my dear; and, to tell the truth, I am very glad it should be so. Only I don't know what old Halsen and his boy are going to do when our young 'medical' comes flourishing a diploma in their faces, and demanding his little bride."

"Dear me! your words bring things so near!" the lady exclaimed, "why such an event might happen in three or four years! But they are such children!"

"In four years, madame, your son will be twenty-three, and the heiress of Collaster will be of age! I am heartily glad that they retain still so much of the unaffected frankness and simplicity of the mere boy and girl. I hope they will remain children in *that* sense for some years to come, but we will welcome, as is right, the day when our son chooses a wife, and makes a home for himself."

Mrs. Holtum mused a little, and then remarked slowly, "I should not like poor Hoskuld to be—troubled again,—and that boy Garth—after all he has come through;—they tell me he has become quite dependent

on Gerta for everything. To be sure *he* is a mere boy, and younger than she; but in some ways he is in advance of his years, and very sensitive—one never knows what may happen."

"Don't worry yourself. I think we can trust Gerta to manage her Trow-cousin. Moreover, this illness of his has brought the boy and his father to a better understanding of each other, and kindlier relationship altogether, which will lessen Garth's need for the girl's sympathy. Then he and Miss Congreve have many traits in common, and are great friends. She is exercising the influence which a young lady of eighteen can make of such service to a boy two years her junior."

"But suppose he falls in love with her?"

"Well, a fit of calf-love won't hurt him, for she will know how to manage him and it! Young ladies of her years are ten years more matured than boys of his age, and Miss Congreve is very sensible indeed."

"It is true," said Mrs. Holtum sagely, "that girls of eighteen are usually a decade more evenly balanced in mind—more grown-up in fact—than boys of sixteen; but when both have turned twenty, things begin to reverse themselves. When do Mr. Congreve and his daughter leave for England?"

"I understood the gentleman to say that he must be off in a few weeks time, but he told me he thought of asking for a home at Broch for his daughter, and I said I believed no happier arrangement could be, of mutual

benefit, and likely to produce excellent results. Did I say wisely, madame, or was I blind to the best interests of all those dear young persons."

"It is a charming plan, and I hope Hoskuld will see his way to agreeing," Mrs. Holtum answered delightedly. "I can't see any reason he could have against it, particularly if he has begun to study Garth's wellbeing, as you say he has."

Those few last days were a dream of delight to Gerta. She had not begun to ask herself plainly what it meant, she was only conscious that she was back among those who were dearest in all the world to her, and that she was quite blissfully happy in Svein's society. Beyond that she had not waked up to look. It was only when they were taking their last walk together that the dawn of a coming day suddenly flooded the girl's artless soul with a new bewildering light of delight. This was caused by Svein saying, as they talked of his studies and aspirations, "I am working for something higher and dearer than a doctor's degree, Gerta. The winning a diploma is only a step towards a better goal. The dream of my boyhood is to be the hope of my manhood—is it not?"

Gerta looked up, and the love in Svein's eyes shivered in one moment the child-life that had lingered so long in her nature. She knew herself a woman, with woman's crown of blessing waiting to be set upon her, and a wonderful dignity came into her air, as she simply and sweetly answered, "Your dream and hope are mine."

They did not say another word, but walked silently home, hand-in-hand, like a pair of Babes in the Wood. This had happened near the end of their walk, and when Mrs. Holtum saw them coming slowly along, a tender seriousness on the young faces, and the light of a new life in their eyes, she said to herself, "Oh, yes! the children have grown up, sure enough!"

Next day the *Tangie* set out for Lerwick, where the four students were to join the steamer that would carry them to Scotland. Mrs. Mitchell, Isobel, and Gerta, under charge of the Laird, accompanied the lads to the metropolis, where the final good-byes were said—none of all the party touched by the shadow of foreboding.

"You will be sure to return next year with Fred," Isobel said to Ned Langton, whose healthy looks spoke so much for what the holidays in Lunda had done for him.

"The *Laulie* is to be newly painted and done up, Eric, for you next season," said Eric's mother, "so make haste and come back to us. I need not say now how we shall long for you."

"You won't forget to write to Broch as well as Collaster, Svein," Gerta whispered shyly, whereat Svein laughed; and then the Laird said, "*I* am a great deal worse than the mothers of you, lads—I weary for you. The Isle doesn't seem itself without you, and I shall be heartily glad when 'Varsity is done with, and you

come to take your natural places in the world—the assistants and successors of your fathers."

Fred put his arm through that of the Laird, and said, "We shall never be worthy to stand in our fathers' shoes, but we mean to live so that our fathers may never be ashamed of us."

"God bless you, my son," the Laird made answer; and he took the lad in his arms and kissed him.

Fred Garson was a manly youth, and his father the personification of stalwart, manly vigour; but that womanly embrace took nothing from the masculine dignity of either, and both were pleased to remember, later, that the tears which dimmed their eyes at parting held no cloud of misapprehension or want of trust.

"You have *always* been a good boy, Fred, to me," was the father's parting words, and many times did the son take comfort from the remembrance of those words when the voice that spoke them was for ever silent.

The final farewells were hurried over, and the *Tangie* departed, dipping her flag to the little group stationed on the steamer's deck.

It had been arranged that the sloop should go straight from Lerwick to Burrawick, where Gerta was wanted and expected. Accordingly, the anchor dropped first opposite Broch, and the Yarl came on board at once to welcome his friends. In his hospitable fashion he pressed them to come to his house

for dinner, or even half an hour's rest; but Mrs. Mitchell and Isobel were anxious to get home, and relieve their feelings by a little private "weep" for the departure of their heroes. The Laird also wished to be at home as soon as possible, for there he knew Fred's mother was wearying somewhat. Tom Holtum, with a new consciousness of his own inferiority to Svein, was in a hurry to reach Collaster and show his parents that he wasn't really so bad as he seemed, but was eager to fill his elder brother's place to the best of his ability.

Thus nobody accepted Mr. Halsen's invitation; so he took possession of Gerta and returned to Broch, while the *Tangie* once more departed for Lunda.

Very tender, indeed, was the welcome Gerta received, and her "afflicted feelings" were greatly comforted by the glad news awaiting her, that Amy was to remain at Broch for a year, "and for ever if she likes," said the Yarl, little dreaming what a concatenation of events were to happen, which should bring her doing so within the range of probability.

A fortnight later the sloop made another run to Lerwick. This time Amy, her father, and the Yarl were the passengers. Mr. Congreve was consigned, as the lads had been, to the steamer, and his companions returned to Burra Isle.

The *Laulie* had been towed from Westervoe when the yacht made her last run there, and nothing remained to be done but consign the *Tangie* to her

owner again. This Harry Mitchell, representing the late captain, did in concise terms.

"We're awfully obliged to you, sir," he said; "we've had a high old time with the yacht, and I hope you won't find her any the worse for our handling."

He tumbled into his own boat, followed closely by his brother Bill. Tom Holtum was soon beside them, so was Gloy; and lastly, Rolf Soeder, in a more leisurely, but quite as seaman-like a manner, got into the *Laulie*, which was soon on the wing for Lunda, and the Yarl's yacht swung deserted at anchor.

CHAPTER XX.

STORMY DAYS.

A SHETLAND winter is not usually what we understand by "severe." The cold is not so intense as it is on the east coast of Scotland, and the snows do not last long at a time though they come early, fade and return, and linger late in the spring. The winter which Amy Congreve spent at Broch was exceptionally fine, and she declared the insular climate to be better than that of her native Kent. I suppose she will persist in saying the same thing till she experiences a Shetland winter when the Isles are shrouded with snow for five months, and the atmosphere is so thick that the brief day seems more like a strangled twilight than a period of time presided over by the sun!

The household at Broch was a very happy, though small and quiet, one. Garth was quite recovered, and prosecuting his studies with Amy with such zeal that he soon left her in the lurch. The interest which his father now took in all that Garth did was of immense value to him, strengthening his purpose, and enlarging his aims, while the help Miss Congreve gave, and the

sympathy of Gerta, acted like sunshine upon grain in summer time. Under such pleasing warmth his talents were sure to produce the ripe fruit of genius, and the Yarl was ready to allow, when some of the results of Garth's studies brought him before the world's notice as a discoverer and careful investigator in natural science, that "a heap could be made of science and poetry after all!"

But I am running a little ahead of the main thread of my narrative. We cannot spend much time in recording details, but must be content with relating chief incidents, and leaving the imaginations of readers to fill in the picture correctly.

About the middle of November the weather, up to that time comparatively mild, became broken and characterised by sudden and erratic gales,—no snow but frequent torrents of rain and thunderstorms.

The novelty of high wind accompanied by slashing showers, and thunders roaring at midnight, delighted Miss Congreve. It was something quite new in her experience; but when she saw that Gerta listened shiveringly to the storm voices, and that the Yarl muttered, "If this lasts any time there will be trouble on our shores," Amy's enjoyment of Shetland "broken weather" abated.

Then there reached Broch news of wreckage on the coasts; and sometimes at night, above the voices of wind and thunder, was heard the signal from—

> "Some ship in distress that cannot live
> On such an angry sea."

Once a disabled vessel put into Burrawick, and the men were cordially entertained at Broch. More than once news came from Lunda that ocean wanderers had met their fate among the Ootskerries, by the Helyers, upon Vega and Whaalaire—those rocks and holmes that circle the Isle like the "spiked crown around giant brows."

These things were sad to hear, and made Amy sigh, as all the others did (whom experience had taught), for the drizzle and damp, the mellow light, and gentle winds of October, the slight frost, and clear invigorating air which had heralded November's coming.

"I wonder how long this sort of thing is going to last!" Gerta exclaimed one morning as she stood by the window, and watched a wreath of fog settle slowly down upon the crest of Hovaness—a sure sign that the wind would rise before long. "I would much prefer a good, long, downright rouser from the nor'-west, or a week's steady fall of snow. But this—you never can tell what will happen, calm or tempest. The weather is upside down for certain."

The explanation of Gerta's petulance was, in part, because the uncertain state of the weather had prevented a long-promised visit to the Ha' at Blaesound. Fred's birthday was near, and his parents meant to have a merry gathering of his friends that day, though he himself was absent; Mr. Halsen, Garth, and the girls had been invited to come a week before *the* day, to remain as long after it as they pleased; but the

birthday was very near, and no favourable time for making the voyage had occurred.

The *Tangie* had been very seldom used since the lads left, and her owner was truly anxious for any pretence of putting her to active service; so he had got everything ship-shape on board, and only waited upon the winds for a chance to put out to sea. He was close by Gerta when she spoke, and he fully shared her feelings.

"I did think," he said, "when I took a look out this morning at daybreak, that we should be able to make a try to-day, but yon cap on Hovaness bodes no good. However, we shall see at the turn of the tide. Though the sea must be pretty rough outside, we shall soon have the advantage of a following tide, and we can lie course with the wind as it is; so we should be able to make Blaesound easily enough. The bother is with such unsettled weather, one never knows how quickly a change may come, and I don't want to be caught in a gale between Lunda and Burra Isle with you lassies on board. The *Tangie* would ride it out, of course; but you would not like it," and he laughed.

"I am sure, uncle, we should not mind how much we were tumbled about, if only we could be landed on Lunda. Amy and I are good sailors, and even if we weren't we'd rather be sea-sick half a day than be late for the gathering on Fred's birthday. Don't you agree with me, Amy?"

"Certainly, and so does Garth. We are all ready to

be the victims of *mal de mer* straight away, Mr. Halsen, rather than wait on capricious Boreas any longer."

The Yarl went down to the fishing-station where a few seamen were loafing about, and he had some talk with them about the weather. Some thought that the wind would not rise more till the evening; one was certain that it was going to fall, and another declared it meant to hold steady till next day; but all assured the old gentleman that his darling sloop was game for worse weather than anything she was likely to meet that day if she "took the way," as he so much desired she should do.

A little further talk and reflection, then Mr. Halsen said to the two able fishers he had engaged as crew, "Well, boys, if you think it can be safely done (*I* am sure it can), we'll get under weigh and slip out with the tide."

The men agreed. The girls and Garth were warned to get ready at once, and at the "turn of the day" the *Tangie* was flying under close-reefed canvas for Blaesound.

Garth resigned himself to Fate very shortly after he came on board, and retired to a bunk; but the girls persisted in remaining on deck, until the Yarl, seeing that both were becoming very much alarmed at the fearful appearance of the heavy rollers breaking in every direction, persuaded them to follow the lad's example, and go below.

Huddled up together they sat very silent, except

when Mr. Halsen called cheerily down to them, when they would make some faint attempts at returning his jokes.

The din of the waves, the creaking of cordage and planking, the rolling and dipping of the yacht, were all so much worse than anything Amy or Gerta had ever experienced before that they were quite sure they never wanted to be at sea in a storm again, and would willingly have given up the anticipated pleasures of the gathering at Blaesound to be set down in Broch out of all that turmoil of waters. They were not in danger, of course; but their inexperience made it appear so, and they were quite sure that the peril was extremely great. Only those who spend a great deal of time on the sea learn to treat lightly the jolts and topsy-turvy ill-usage which Ocean administers by way of salutary reminders of his more terrific power.

The voyage from Burrawick to Blaesound was not long; and, ere the short winter day closed in, the *Tangie* was running smoothly over the more quiet surface of the sheltered voe. The girls had come on deck again, and were looking eagerly for signs that their approach had been noticed at the Ha'; but no signal could be seen, and the Yarl remarked with a laugh, "It is not often one catches the Laird of Lunda asleep. Won't it be fun to come upon them unawares? They evidently don't dream we could 'take the way' in such weather."

"I think a boat is at the quay with some one in

her," Gerta exclaimed. "Yes, I am sure of it, and she is leaving; she is coming off, and will be with us as soon as we anchor, uncle."

Sure enough, Fred Garson's *Mermaid* shot out from the quay at that moment, and was soon alongside the yacht. Her occupants were Harry and Bill Mitchell; but, strange to say, the Manse boys were not ready with a merry welcome as usual. Their faces were grave, and Gerta said—trembling with dread of some unknown calamity—"There is something wrong; they have bad news for us."

The bad news was told as soon as the lads were aboard.

"It's the Laird," said Harry, in answer to Mr. Halsen's quick "What's up?" "He had an accident. He did such a noble deed, but we fear at a terrible sacrifice——"

He stopped short, and the break in his voice said more than any words. Nobody spoke for a few seconds, all were so shocked by the wholly unexpected tidings. Then Garth asked, "What does the doctor say?"

"Dr. Holtum does not think he can recover. His spine has been fatally injured," was the brief, terrible announcement, at which the Yarl clutched at a rope, and ground his teeth to keep back the great cry surging up from his heart.

The young people broke into low wails of lamentation, and for a few minutes they stood around

Mr. Halsen sobbing so bitterly that he could scarcely restrain himself from joining in their grief. But at last, with heaving chest and forehead wet with the dew of agony—for he had good reason to love the Laird as a brother—he said solemnly, "God's will be done! We can only bow silent when He speaks."

"Tell us how it happened, Harry," Garth sobbed (and at that moment Garth was thinking of the day when he and the Laird were together on the hill-side in extremity of grief, and the boy's thoughts flew to Fred so far away and so unconscious of what was happening).

"It is soon told," Harry answered. "One of the small boats, coming in Blaesound with the gale last Thursday, was driven upon the Niv and was smashed. Two of her crew were washed away. The other two managed to scramble up on the Niv, but they could not hold on long there with such a sea breaking, and nobody would venture to put off in a boat to their help, though the skerry is not much more than a stone's throw from the shore."

"It is not far, but the sea runs deep and strong around the Niv," Mr. Halsen said in a low voice, guessing what Harry had to tell further.

"Nobody would go, and one of the two poor fellows was washed off and drowned before our eyes. Then the Laird came along from the Ha' running. He had only just heard of the accident, and he asked quickly, with his clear strong voice that we have all heard so often

in times of trouble cheering us, "Can't you put off men?"

"No, we can't," they all said.

"Give me a rope, quick, every moment is precious," was all he said after that, and he flung off his coat and boots, and with the rope fastened to his waist, went right into the sea. He reached the Niv—the man got hold on the rope, but somehow he was frightened, or clumsy, we can't tell exactly how it happened—only the Laird was dashed on the rock—and when the two were pulled ashore, he was quite senseless."

"That was on Thursday, and this is Saturday. Is —is he—like that now?" Mr. Halsen asked.

"Oh no! he has been quite conscious since yesterday morning, and he is not in pain. We have seen him—Bill and I—we—everybody—oh, he has said such words to——"

Harry could say no more, but leaning his head on his arm wept bitterly.

"Then it may be permitted *me* to see my good friend and brother again," said the Yarl, and instantly proceeded to the boat, followed by the others.

"Do you think we shall be in the way, Harry?" Gerta asked, "because you know Amy and I can go to Collaster at once. It may trouble Mrs. Garson to have us come."

"Mother is at the Ha', and father comes and goes. I think Isobel would like you to come for a few

minutes. But after that we'll take you to Collaster, and Garth can come to the Manse. I am sure the Laird will be glad to see Mr. Halsen."

"He looked," said Bill, "so bright and like himself when he spoke to us, that I *couldn't* believe I was bidding him good-bye for ever."

"He is so brave and resigned," Harry added; "what a noble man he always has been!"

Then the Ha' was reached, and they were received and made welcome by Mrs. Mitchell, who had taken upon herself some of the poor wife's duties, while she sat by the dying man receiving his last words and wishes.

In a few minutes Isobel crept into the room, all the animation gone from her bright face, which was white and worn. But she was composed. She had told herself that a time to weep would come, but not while her father remained with them.

"Father knows you are all here. Dr. Holtum is with him, and told him. He wants to see you—if you will," she said.

The two girls and Garth were taken to the sick-room, and privileged to receive, as so many others had done, a few tender, wise, solemn parting words. The Laird had lived for others, and for others he was dying. He had no thoughts about himself, and it was even then an actual pleasure to him to feel that such words from him at such a moment was comfort to those who received them.

When Mr. Halsen had gathered himself together so as to be sure that he should have no ill-timed breakdown, he allowed himself to be led into the presence of his departing friend.

"I am so glad you've come, Yarl," Mr. Garson said. Ah! his voice was no longer, as Harry had described it, clear and strong. It was ebbing low like his life; and Mr. Halsen, realising then in all its fulness the loss coming to all, could only clasp the hand held out and falter, "I wish we could change places, you and I. A useless old hulk like myself could have been easily spared, but you—the mystery of such a blow!"

"It is no mystery to me, my friend," murmured the dying man with a smile. "No mystery. I have had a happy life, a very happy life, without any heavy trials—all sunshine; and now, without pain, God calls me to a happier life still! Oh! it's all right. There's no mystery about His love and kindness and call home. And I am ready. There is only one thing I am not *quite* satisfied about—I don't murmur that it is denied, but I regret it cannot be—I most longingly regret it—yet—God teach me absolute submission—I so long to bid my son good-bye—I so want to look once more on the bonnie face of my Fred; and there are some things—for the guidance of his youth in an important position—that I could say *now* which would have double weight with him—oh! if it might please God to spare me till he can come—till I can see my boy once more—once more."

They conversed for a short time longer, then the doctor thought it advisable to banish visitors from the sick room, and Mr. Garson let his friend go, saying as the Yarl rose to leave, "*This* need not be 'good-bye.' You will stay—in the house—to see me go."

CHAPTER XXI.

THE YARL'S ERRAND.

"DOCTOR," said Mr. Halsen, as soon as they got downstairs, "how long can he live? what is the longest?"

"A week at the *very most*, and it may be less."

"Has Fred been sent for?"

"A runner left for Lerwick yesterday with letters which will leave by the steamer on Monday. But you know the vessel does not return till to-morrow week, and Fred could not be here before the afternoon or evening of that day at earliest. Poor lad! I had great difficulty in writing the sad news to him, but I hope his mother's note enclosed in mine would help him. It is hard—hard our friend can't see his son, as he so longs to do."

"He *shall* see him, with God's permission," the Yarl exclaimed suddenly. "I have an idea! Look here, doctor. The wind has been settling down steadily all to-day, and is veering round to the nor'-west, and that, I do believe, means it will keep there for a time, and we shall not have any more unexpected gusts till weather breaks again. My little *Tangie* is quite equal

to a brisk run across to Aberdeen. With the wind as it is to-night—moonlight too, and the sea running off—she ought to make Aberdeen by to-morrow night or early on Monday morning. I suppose you can get one of those telegraph affairs—messages—sent to Edinburgh?"

"Yes, you can. But the point in this case is how to get to the mainland. I am afraid, Halsen, the *Tangie* can't do it, and even if she reached, how could she get back in the face of a contrary wind in time?"

"She wouldn't be wanted to hurry back at all risks: indeed I wouldn't wish Fred on board unless very sure my sloop could bring him to Lunda faster than he could come otherwise. I know Fred would barter Lunda itself for the chance of seeing his father alive, and as soon as he gets the message I shall send by telegraph he'll start and find a steam concern of some sort to ferry him across here."

The doctor shook his head, and called it a wild scheme; he went even further and hinted at foolhardiness; but the Yarl's answer was too pathetic to be gainsaid, "The purpose of my plan must be its excuse. I'll risk my life on it, and there are men by dozens in Lunda who should desire as much as I desire to risk their lives to gratify the last wish of him who was always ready to lay down his life for them. But there is no danger, if the sloop is not caught in a fresh storm, and I'll trust Him who holds

the winds in the hollow of His hand, to let me do this thing in safety."

There was no turning him aside from his purpose. He went down to the hamlet and explained what he wanted, and in a short time he had a picked crew ready to sail to the world's end under his orders.

Provisions, blankets, and "oil-skins" were hurriedly collected and stowed aboard, and the Yarl was ready to sail when the moon had risen high over the Ha', her cloudless face looking serenely down upon the mourning house.

It was agreed that the Laird must not be told of his friend's adventure. If it succeeded and Fred was brought in time, so much the better. If it was a failure it was better that the invalid should not know that the attempt had been made.

"I'd like to see him before I leave," Mr. Halsen said: so the Laird was merely told that the other was obliged to absent himself for a short time, but would return speedily.

"Good-night; it is only good-night," said the Yarl. "I am going on an urgent errand, wish me God-speed."

Mr. Garson was too ill and exhausted to wonder, or ask a question, and merely answered, "God be with you, and bless your going out and coming in; let *Him* guide you in all things, my friend."

Garth clung speechlessly to his father's hand when bidding good-bye, but never uttered a single remon-

strance. He had not done so when first told of his father's intention, and the Yarl appreciated the boy's thoughtfulness. They knew each other well enough then to be assured that such silence on Garth's part meant very much the reverse of selfishness or cowardice. But after the old man left the shore his son disappeared for some time; and when at last he returned to the Ha', it was plain that Garth was suffering, and would suffer, as much as any one of all those over whom the shadow of death and parting lay.

We will follow the little *Tangie* and her sea-king. It is true that Hoskuld Halsen had inherited some of the failings of his Shetland "forbears." The Viking traits still survived in his impatience at all restraint, his dislike to methodical and continuous employment, his delight in seafaring, his sly enjoyment of a little quiet smuggling, his condoning the offence of "wrecking," his sympathy with the "victims of oppression," as he called people who got into trouble through evading taxation. But with these had survived the nobler characteristics which marked the Norseman, and gave to British blood that valour, generosity, endurance, pluck, which make the Briton, like the Norseman, a king upon the ocean. Many times of old had Vikinger launched boldly from Blaesound on a wild winter's evening to seek their spoil by wave and wold, with strong belief in themselves and in the ships that were to them like living creatures; with implicit faith in the omens which bade them dare all and win, they recked

not storm, or foe; but set their faces to the sea, and flung back the challenge of the winds with mocking laughter.

Many times of old had the Yarls gone forth from Lunda upon tempest-wings to prove their manhood and daring in high emprise—to earn renown by mighty deeds. But never, never had Viking or Yarl departed on such heroic errand as that upon which old Halsen went when he set the *Tangie's* prow to the North Sea, with wild waves leaping beneath her, and a wild sky overhead, determined to bring an only son to receive his dying father's blessing.

By this time I hope it has been made very apparent that though the *Tangie* was playfully dubbed "yacht," she bore little resemblance to our modern butterflies-of-the-sea, which seem all wing and no body, and with as little power of balance as a moth in a breeze. She was a swift sailer—as swiftness meant thirty years ago—and she was as light and safe as a life-buoy. Mr. Halsen did not overrate her perfections as a sea-boat by any means, and she proved his trust in her that night. He had wisely taken double supply of men, so that those on duty were frequently relieved; for though they had often been at sea in as wild weather, that had happened during the warmer seasons of the year, when they escaped the dangers of a biting cold.

The wind did not hold on so steadily from the same "airt" as Mr. Halsen had expected, therefore their progress was not so rapid as he had hoped. But when

another tide was with them the *Tangie* flew ahead, and reached Aberdeen some time before any one at Lunda expected she could.

As she ran to harbour the Yarl rubbed his hands together with the utmost satisfaction and said, "Now while the doctor's summons is coasting with the mail steamer, not to reach Fred for days yet, my message will be with him in a few hours. I'll have a steamer of some sort ready for him. Not that she is safer than my sloop," said Mr. Halsen, "but this wind is against a quick voyage back for us, and the point is to get the lad to Lunda as quickly as possible."

The old man had scarcely ever been away from his native islands, and knew little by experience of the bustling life beyond them; but he was at home among seafaring folk. So no time was lost by him in making inquiries and arrangements. He secured the services of a powerful steam-tug, whose skipper promised to be ready as soon as Fred should arrive.

Mr. Halsen found it more difficult to decide upon the sort of message he should send, for his kindly heart felt it hard to break with telegraphic brevity the overwhelming news. At last he decided to communicate with Fred through Ned Langton, and his choice of Ned, in preference to Eric or Svein, showed an instinctive knowledge of human nature, which we should hardly have credited the Yarl with.

The words which were flashed from Aberdeen to Edinburgh were—"Break to Fred terrible accident

to the Laird, who wants to see his son. No time to lose, doctor says. Steam-ship waiting on Fred here.—HOSKULD HALSEN."

We can imagine—I will not attempt to describe—the feelings with which that message was received. In spite of Ned's thoughtful manner of breaking the news, it came like a death-wound to Fred, and for half an hour he was so prostrate as to be scarcely able to think.

While Ned and Eric strove to rally his fortitude, Svein sent reply to the Yarl—"We hope Fred can join you soon;" and with that answer the old gentleman had to content himself, until a second reached him from Svein—"Fred left by 12.25 train. Langton accompanies him to Aberdeen."

In all his life Mr. Halsen never spent such a weary, miserable time, as that which passed while he waited for Fred. The hours seemed as days on the one hand, and as moments on the other,—long in waiting for the son, short in thinking of the father, whose last of time they were.

By the time Fred and Langton reached Aberdeen the Yarl had all his plans finally arranged. He could not bear to let Fred go on that sorrowful voyage without him, no more could he give up the chance of seeing his friend again. Yet the safety of the men he had brought from Lunda seemed to demand that he should himself command his sloop on the return, with adverse winds, and the possibility of worse. He made a compromise, acting upon a suggestion from

the tug's skipper; and the *Tangie* was ignominiously towed the greater part of the way home by that "noisy lumping concern," as the descendant of sea-kings designated the tug, which was doing such admirable service.

When they neared Lunda, a favourable side-wind gave the *Tangie* excuse to cast off the tow-line, and she preceded her convoy into Blaesound, by Mr. Halsen's orders, though he and Fred were on the other vessel.

"If any one is looking out," he explained, "and sees *her* coming, and then this thing, they will know I bring you."

So it was. No one on the island dreamed that Mr. Halsen's errand could have been so expeditiously performed, and no look-out was being kept. The Laird was very near the end then, and all had given up hoping that the yearning desire of his fatherly heart could be gratified.

Isobel had left his side for a moment, to recover her composure which had broken down before his oft-repeated "Oh, that I might live to see my son!" She went to the window, and gazed blankly on the voe, seeing nothing for the tears that blinded her. But, struggling hard, she wiped her eyes and grew calmer; and then her glance fell upon the *Tangie,* with her ungainly consort, speeding up Blaesound, as fast as sails and steam could carry them.

"Fred is here," Isobel's heart told her on the moment;

and it was as difficult to control the expression of her thankfulness as it had been to conceal her grief. She had to stand at the window some minutes before she could venture to speak or move; but the entrance of Dr. Holtum just then helped her. One glance exchanged between them was enough to tell each that the other knew that Mr. Halsen had done as he said. Isobel swiftly returned to the bed, on which her mother was sitting supporting the Laird on her arm; the girl looked again at the doctor, and receiving a nod from him, she knelt beside her father and whispered, "Dearest, we still hope Fred can come in time. Letters are a long time on the way, and Mr. Halsen thought the *Tangie* could go faster, so he went with her to fetch Fred. We hope and believe God will grant your desire."

"How good of the old man!" the Laird answered faintly; "*that* was what took him so soon away! God reward him and speed his errand! I am weak—and human love is strong on the brink of the grave, Isobel. Pray, my lassie, that Fred may come before I go."

"He *will* come. They should be here ere long. Mr Halsen would find a steamer to bring Fred. Father, dearest, you will see him; he will be here *soon*."

Before Dr. Holtum had entered the sickroom he had assured himself, by the aid of a telescope, that Fred was actually on board, and he now said—

"The Yarl and his yacht have done well. They have been to Scotland, and Fred is now in the sound.

almost at anchor. He will be with you in a few minutes."

"Oh, thank God!" Mrs. Garson faltered, and the Laird folding his feeble hands murmured in the words of the patriarch of old, "It is enough—I shall see him before I die."

CHAPTER XXII.

VOER-TIME.

We will not linger upon the dark pages which sooner or later come to all lives, and are the needful reminders to young and old that earth is a place of parting as well as a home where hallowed bonds are formed, that death must come as naturally as life, and that the pleasures of time must be baptized in the sea of sorrow which purifies them for the uses of eternity.

Let us drop a veil over the events which occurred on and after Fred's coming, and take up the thread of our narrative when the winter was past, and the time of the singing of birds was at hand. The hamlets and shores of Burrawick, as well as Broch, presented a lively appearance one spring morning, for all the people and domestic animals seemed to be out of doors rejoicing in the revival of Nature from its long sleep, and eager to begin again the business of living. Women and boys were busy on the "riggs" preparing the earth and sowing the seed. Some were scattering heaps of decayed seaweed over the ground, which others were delving, and some were harrowing with the aid of queer

little oxen and ponies. The greater number of the men were on the beach overhauling tackle and boats, preparatory to commencing the haaf-fishing. A great deal of talking was being done—the Shetlanders are loquacious at their work, and, unlike most other people, seem to get on faster with their employment when their tongues are going.

It is wonderful how much actual efficient service can be done by young children when the work is made pleasant to them, and their hearts are given to it. A number of little ones were rendering great assistance to the labourers by picking up and carrying from the "riggs" the many small stones turned up by the spade, and it was pleasant to notice the kindliness with which those juvenile workers were addressed.

The scene was rendered yet more lively by the presence of large flocks of seagulls, who were flying about the delvers as tame as pigeons, picking up the worms unearthed by the spade, and gossiping among themselves like village matrons.

There was a fresh, not unpleasant, odour of burning weeds and tar-barrels mingled in the air with the smell of tang and newly-turned earth. Frequently a cheery halloo or merry laugh went to swell the chorus of the gulls, and overhead the laverocks bore Nature's resurrection hymn on its way to heaven.

Close in shore lay the *Tangie* all spick and span, for she had been "beached" a month before, and newly

caulked and painted. Her sides glanced with the blue-black of a raven's plumage, and a smart white "bend," elegantly traced, and edged on the lower side with a narrow red line, added greatly to the grace of her appearance. Her sails were beautifully clean and snowy white, and were fully spread, though she lay at anchor, with her boat floating astern.

The reason of this was that the yacht's gear was at the moment undergoing a thorough examination by Mr. Halsen. Not a spar or rope escaped him. He had overhauled her (when she lay on the beach) after the most minute manner, and he overhauled her a second time when she swung at her moorings. At last he was satisfied, and said so to the man who had her in charge, and whose life the Yarl had made a burden ever since the *Tangie* went "into dock" for repairs.

"I think she'll do now, Tammy, eh?" he remarked. "I really don't think there's anything more *can* be done to her, and I must say you've got her ship-shape at last."

"If shü doesna plase the Englisher noo, he's ill ta plase, I will say," replied Tammy.

Then Mr. Halsen said, "The lad Gloy Winwick has the making of a sailor in him, and I think we could not have a better hand. You see he was under Rolf Soeder in the *Tangie* last year, and knows her ways a bit. He's a smart boy, and has had good training."

"Oh, there's naething wrang wi' the boy. I couldna

want a better help. But, wi' your leave, sir, are ye thinking o' sailing her yoursel a' the time?"

"Whenever Mr. Congreve goes out to dredge *I* shall be skipper, and you will take charge when I am not on board. We shall always be able to pick up an extra hand when he's wanted."

"Yea! yea! There's aye a chap ta be had for the asking."

"Well, I think we've fixed everything now, and are ready for the run to Lerwick to-morrow; so if you'll bring the dingy along, I'll go ashore now."

Tammy hauled the boat, usually swinging a good way astern, close alongside, and the Yarl took himself to the land. When he reached his own garden he stood still and smiled. Such a pretty, animated picture was there to look upon. It would have made the surliest man on earth smile.

Garth was lying in his favourite attitude on the ground with his head on Fram, but he was not reading, and there was a thick rug between him and the grass. He was watching Amy busy at work on some flower-beds. Before her advent at Broch its garden had been very much left to nature and Fram; but Amy had determined that one half circle of turf was sufficient for Fram to scratch and Garth to sprawl upon, and that the rest must be laid out in flower-plots. So she had hired Gloy and set him to work, and between them they had covered the greater part of the green slope in front of Broch with flower-beds, circular, crescent,

oblong—any and every shape that suggested itself to her fancy.

Gerta laughed, encouraged, and pretended to admire; and Garth applauded rapturously, even offered to assist, and certainly gave valuable advice. Thus stimulated Amy went on energetically with her "voer." She ordered shrubs and flower-roots in great numbers to be sent from London, and these she arranged with so much taste that the Yarl declared he believed she meant to turn Broch into a paradise of vegetation at last!

"Is that the serpent you are introducing into Eden, my dear?" Mr. Halsen said, after contemplating her work silently for a few minutes; and Amy, lifting her bright face, answered laughing—"I must allow it looks a little like it, but I thought a narrow, irregular, zig-zag border would finish off this bit of turf nicely. You see I could not bring the flower-beds close up to the 'fell-dyke,' so I've left the turf near it just as it was. It was Garth who suggested this snake-arrangement, and I think it looks very well."

"It does; but I wonder you did not demolish the 'fell-dyke,' and carve a row of star-fishes, crabs, new-moons, and fish-hooks upon its foundation, as you've done all over Garth's out of door bed."

"Ah, that fell-dyke! It has been my sole grief throughout the task," Amy said with mock solemnity. "Gerta declares it is the finest thing about the whole place, and with my lovely Alpine flowers and darling primroses, it may yet be so."

Suddenly Gerta's voice came from an open window overhead—"Think I'd have let her demolish my fell-dyke! Why, Uncle Hoskuld, what an idea! I should have nothing to jump on to when I want to see out the Wick, and Trow would have no shelter from the east wind if the fell-dyke were away. No, no! Madame Amy may set snakes wriggling all over the turf; but she'll '*see snakes*' if I catch her digging into my fell-dyke."

"Shall you have done your voer to-morrow, young lady?" the Yarl asked of Amy, shaking his fist as he spoke at Gerta; "you know this Adam of yours will be wanted on board the *Tangie*. He's a regular Jack-of-all-trades, is Gloy."

"We shall have everything finished and lovely to-morrow, Mr. Halsen. I want this for a 'surprise' for father, you know, Oh, I *am* glad the time of his coming has arrived—though I have been so happy, and you have made me so much at home."

"I suppose you will be quite ready to leave us when the autumn comes," the Yarl said with a mischievous screwing together of his lips, which none but Gerta saw. At his words Amy looked grave, and Garth troubled.

"Don't let us speak of that. I cannot bear to think of it," she said, and dropped her rake disconsolately.

> "What is the use of sighing
> When time is on the wing,"

carolled Gerta at the window. There was a little

heap of moss, in which roots had been packed, lying conveniently within reach of Garth's hand, and some of it he rolled together and sent flying at his cousin.

"Thanks, Trow!" she exclaimed, as she caught the mossy ball. "I know you meant to compliment me on my singing of Amy's pet song. But I beg to remind you, good people, that tea has been waiting ten whole minutes, and Beana says her rye-bannocks will be like sheets of glue if they are left to get colder."

Garth rose and shook himself, and Fram gave a delighted bark as his master said "Rye-bannocks, old boy!" Evidently Fram believed that he was to be a partaker in those delicacies, and he was not mistaken.

Leaving Gloy to finish up the tail of her snake Amy put her arm through that of the Yarl and followed Garth indoors, and they were all very merry over their tea, thereafter recounting their morning's avocations, and planning all sorts of fun for the future. They had been promising themselves (all through the winter) a "high old time" when the spring should bring Mr. Congreve as he had arranged on leaving, for the loss which had befallen all who came within the influence of the Laird of Lunda had not darkened the homes of his friends. He had said when dying that none must nourish grief or regret for him, so, though he could never be forgotten, his death had not cast a lasting shadow on the lives of those who loved him, and the young people were as ready as before to enter with zest into the innocent amusements of their age, and

the islands. Perhaps I should mention here that shortly after Mr. Garson was gathered to his fathers Fred returned to Edinburgh, taking with him his mother and sister by Dr. Holtum's advice. It was wisely done, for in the society of her son, the interest attached to his studies, and the novel life of a city, Mrs. Garson found relief from a great portion of her sorrow; and Isobel was consoled and restored to cheerfulness through the efforts of her old chum Eric Mitchell and her new friend Ned Langton, who were unwearied in their attentions, every day devising some amusement or occupation for her.

"Divinity students don't seem to require to work so hard as law and medical ones," Mrs. Garson once said to Isobel. "We see much less of Svein and Fred than of the other two."

"I suppose," Isobel, with charming ignorance, replied, "that ministers only require to study one thing; but men who are to be magistrates and lairds—with all sorts of boards to manage and chairs to fill—must learn a great deal: and doctors must, of course, know everything."

Mrs. Garson looked a little dubious, but did not debate upon the point. She merely remarked, "I hope dear Fred is not over-working himself. He is still white and thin. Poor boy! I think, dear, he feels his responsibilities very much, and perhaps that makes him less able for hard study."

The ladies were blessedly ignorant of the real state

of things. As a matter of fact, Eric and Ned were obliged to study quite as much as their comrades, and did so; but the working hours devoted to Isobel were replaced by time which should have been given to sleep.

Such an irrational mode of procedure did not improve their tempers, though fortunately it had little or no effect upon their health. Nor did their closer association make them more intimate friends. As soon as they left Isobel's society, Eric abstracted himself, and Ned fell back as before on Fred, who was entirely blind to the motives for the erratic action of his two friends.

Svein was more shrewd, and speedily came to a just conclusion. There was not much in common between himself and young Langton. It is curious how often the dearest friends of an individual are opposed to each other in character as well as in a kind of instinctive attitude of hold-offishness. Fred Garson's two most intimate friends, Svein and Ned, were never very chummy together, but Svein and Eric Mitchell were; and Svein was by no means pleased to think that a stranger was meddling in the social affairs of Lunda, bringing discord where no discord had been, and threatening to break up the delightful intercourse which had existed among the lads and lasses of the Isle!

So Svein "took advice," and astonished Fred considerably by saying to him, "Look here, old fellow; now that you are, to a great extent, in your father's

place, you'll have to look sharp after one of his foremost duties."

Fred stared, and Svein went on concisely: "Those two fellows have entered the running for Isobel, and you'll have to snub them, or we shall be having a flare-up. I don't wonder at Eric, who has always been so much her friend, but it's rather cheeky of Langton, who is as poor as a church mouse, and an outsider into the bargain."

"Svein, you are speaking of one I love as much as I do yourself," Fred answered gravely.

"I beg your pardon and his," was the instant and frank rejoinder; "but I am thinking of the horrible upset there will be in Lunda if this new friend of yours gets the chance to carry off Isobel under the Mitchells' eyes, and Eric settled as his father's assistant."

"You are looking far ahead, Svein!" Fred answered. "Who can tell what other and more radical changes may come to Lunda before Ned and Eric are ordained. But I'm glad you've spoken of this. I am dreadfully stupid about such things. I never have any thoughts about girls and love, and all that sort of thing, and I never dreamed of *this*."

"Talk it over with your mother," Svein sagely advised; and accordingly the young Laird and Mrs. Garson had a long consultation, with the result that about the time when Amy Congreve was finishing her "voer," Isobel and her mother were departing from Edinburgh for a Continental tour.

CHAPTER XXIII.

TREASURES OF THE DEEP.

"My child, how strong and happy you look!" were the words with which Mr. Congreve greeted his daughter upon the shore below Broch. The Yarl and Garth had gone with the *Tangie* to Lerwick to meet, and bring home, their guest; and the girls, radiant with pleasure, had met him on landing.

"Welcome back!" said Gerta. "How many dredges have you brought, father?" Amy asked saucily, as she gently caught his dignified white beard, and drew his face down that she might give it another kiss of welcome.

"My dear," the scientist answered, "I've absolutely packed the yacht with appliances, particularly such as are needful for undermining ancient structures, and for restoring to youthful persons the use of their natural pedestals."

"Oh, that is too bad," Gerta cried, "in this hour of joy to remind her of a sprained ankle and a demolished Broch!"

"Never mind, Amy," said Garth, "our complete triumph is at hand. Behold!" and he flourished a

pamphlet in sober, scientific-grey cover, "Behold here the published record of our feats! You and I are before the world now, famous personages! set in a niche of the Temple of Fame!"

"Father, you've never put *me* into it?" Amy asked in utmost alarm, and it required a minute perusal of the pamphlet itself to convince her that her name was not mentioned therein. When satisfied on that point she could enjoy to the full her father's generous testimony (in print) to Garth's discoveries and genius.

"We shall want your son up in London, Mr. Halsen," the gentleman said. "He will have to return with me, and help with all the treasures which we shall draw up from the depths of your seas this summer."

"I suppose Burra Isle is not large enough for his brains," the father answered, "though it is big enough for my bones," and he put his hand affectionately on Garth's shoulder, saying, "I'll not be against your going, lad; I am too proud of you now, and too wise, I hope, to desire or wish that my son should resemble myself."

"Where did he get his brains from?" Mr. Congreve asked with a broad smile; "brains go by laws of heredity as much as noses and tempers."

"There *have* been wise men of our race," said the Yarl, "and I heard (for I don't remember her) that my mother was quite a poetess. Her father was a naturalist, well-known in his day, and my father's brother——"

"Oh, Uncle Hoskuld, spare us 'of that ilk!'" cried

Gerta; "surely it is enough that Trow is living proof that genius is 'in the blood;' we'll take our ancestors on trust."

"I wish you would all spare my blushes," the lad exclaimed; and then Mr. Congreve's attention was drawn to Amy's "surprise," which certainly deserved his commendation and received it, to her entire satisfaction.

The next day and the next were occupied in removing from the sloop the multifarious packages which Mr. Congreve had brought, and arranging such of their contents as he required in a large room which had been given up for his use—the best room the old house contained, in fact. But when these preliminary matters were settled, and men engaged for the dredging, nothing remained but to watch the weather and put out to sea whenever it proved fine enough to allow a net or dredge to be dipped.

Phœbus and Pŏseidon were in good humour! Boreas and the Tritons were propitious! so the *Tangie* was enabled to make many successful trips seaward, and wonderful were the trophies she brought to Broch from the bosom of the deep. Corallines, creeping things, curious fishes, exquisitely beautiful shells, living organisations as complicated as the mechanism of a man, and only observable under the microscope,—all were welcome that fell into the dredger's mouth.

That was a time of exceeding pleasure to Garth, we may be sure, and he rendered good service to the

scientist, confirming his desire to have the lad in London as his assistant.

These two did not *always* go with the yacht. The kind of work she did out at sea was by no means pleasant to persons liable to sea-sickness, and only an enthusiasm for science impelled Mr. Congreve and Garth to embark on a dredging expedition. More often the careful, intelligent "Tammy" presided over these voyages; and our friends received from him the treasures of the deep at Broch.

But as the summer advanced, they went afloat oftener, coaxed thereto by the Yarl, who (privately) resented their making so little personal use of the *Tangie.* The girls also took pleasure (when the finer weather came) in a trip with the yacht, and not seldom she made a detour from the main object of her voyage, to set them ashore at Collaster or Westervoe, where we may well believe they were welcome visitors.

Then the holiday-season came round once more, and brought the absentees back to Lunda.

Mrs. Garson and Isobel returned quietly by themselves a few weeks before the lads were due; so that the Ha' was somewhat like itself again when Fred and his friend Ned arrived. Mr. Congreve had (with, of course, the cordial consent of his host) offered the *Tangie's* services; and she conveyed the ladies home to Blaesound. She performed the same duty for the lads, or young men, I think we must now style them, and

there was gladness in the homes of Lunda again, though it was less mirthful than on the previous year.

You may be sure those restless energetic spirits had not been long in the Isle before they were projecting adventures on a large scale; and, shortly after their arrival, the *Laulie* carried a detachment of them to Broch for the purpose of including its household in their schemes.

We know that the Lads of Lunda were entirely capable of launching upon any expedition, and enjoying it too, without the aid of Yarl, or yacht, or any other. But Burra Isle was in possession of one of their own contingent, without which Svein Holtum did not see that "the fun" could be successful. If Gerta was not "in it," Svein would be a broken reed to trust to; and without Svein things were likely to collapse, or come to a dead-lock, for he was the medium by which the varied elements were made to blend in harmony, and work together to successful ends.

So a raid was made on Broch, and some of their projects laid before the family. I am afraid some envious looks were cast at the *Tangie* (looking so natty and busy) as memory recalled the scenes of last vacation, when *she* was the centre of all their delight.

"Ah," said Eric Mitchell, "who but the Laird would ever have thought of such a glorious plan for us!"

"Father was always scheming how to make others happy," Fred remarked, "but I daresay your own father, or the doctor, *thinks* of things as kind, but

they haven't the means to carry it out in deeds, you see."

"There's lots of people, all the same," Eric rejoined, "who *have* the means but never think or care."

His conscience gave him a twinge a little later when they were in the house, talking over matters, and Mr. Congreve said, "I've about done as much dredging on this coast as will keep me employed all the winter: and now I have a fancy to have a look at the Faröe Islands. What would you say, lads, to manning the *Tangie* as she was last autumn, and taking a trip to Thorshaven?"

"Oh, jammy! goloptious! scrumptious!" From the vast and varied vocabulary of collegiate slang came forth the expression of their approval.

The Yarl had been sounded previously, and was therefore not taken by surprise. He rubbed his hands together, and laughed heartily at the excitement created among the lads by Mr. Congreve's wholly unexpected proposal.

After a little Fred Garson said, with some hesitation and gravely, "I am as pleased as the rest—though I fear I shall not be able to share their fun. I don't feel like going from home at present, and I know I ought not. But I'll be awfully obliged if Ned may go in my place."

"Not as our Captain," said Eric decisively.

"I should think not," Fred laughed; "*he* knows

very little about sailing. If you take him as supercargo he will be satisfied, and so shall I."

"I really believe," Mr. Congreve next said, "that if we all combine to bring all our powers of persuasion to bear upon him that we may be able to persuade the Yarl to command his own yacht."

"Ask a fish if he prefers swimming to walking!" Mr. Halsen exclaimed, and broke into hearty laughter. "I'm ready to be elected skipper when you like."

"Hurrah! Three times three, and one more for Captain Halsen!" and that point was settled.

"I suppose you are aware, sir," said Svein modestly, and addressing the scientist, "that the Faröese speak nothing but Danish, or rather a Danish patois of their own. We Shetlanders ought to be ashamed to acknowledge that we don't speak that language, but it's a truth. We may have the blue eyes of our ancestors, but we haven't their tongues."

"With exceptions, my dear fellow," Mr. Congreve answered, and laid his hand on Garth, adding as he did so, "Here is our interpreter. Here is the most wise of the sons of the sea-kings; the one who knows their speech and their story, and can turn these to far greater account than if he had merely inherited their passion for roaming the seas."

We sit rebuked, and 'own up,'" said the Yarl; "but how in the world and when did you learn Danish, Garth?"

"Absurd questions to ask of a Trow," Gerta ex-

claimed; and Garth answered, "I somehow long ago learned to *read* Northern tongues—thanks to all those old books you let me have; but I could only guess at the sounds until Amy came to my aid."

"My daughter is an admirable German scholar," said Mr. Congreve, "and they've hammered this matter out between them. She knew enough Danish pronunciation to teach him how to *speak* what he can *read* so well. These two have not been idle, I find."

"Idle!" cried Gerta. "They never left one moment of quiet peaceful repose all last winter, till I am sure I was tired of them. When they were not digging up plants, or chipping rocks, they were gabbling in unknown tongues, and experimenting with chemicals enough to blow Broch as high as they made *the* Broch descend."

"The long and the short of it, Miss Bruce," Mr. Congreve made reply, "is that my young ally will be the most useful person of us all in this Faröese excursion. And now that it is decided upon, we shall have to beg you ladies to busy yourselves in preparing what you call 'ferdémet' for our journey."

"It will be very stupid here when there's nobody of the male persuasion left," said Gerta with a pout.

"You and Miss Congreve might go over to Lunda while we are away," Svein eagerly suggested, and he was seconded by Fred, who declared it would be a real "charity" in Amy to visit the Ha' and cheer Isobel

with her company; so that was decided upon, for the young people knew that any such arrangement which they made would be readily endorsed by their mothers.

They did not let the grass grow under their feet, or tides often turn; and a few days saw the arrangements completed, the two girls transferred to Lunda, and the *Tangie's* crew and passengers on board.

When it was decided that Ned Langton was to ship as one of the latter class, Eric cheerfully agreed to be second in command. His brother Bill was incapacitated from going through having come off second-best in an encounter with a crab upon the shore. While wading in the sea he had disturbed the crab, which made off in a most inoffensive manner, and if Bill had been content to leave the enemy to his own devices there would have been nothing worse, for the creature did not court a combat. Bill Mitchell, however, had the exactly reverse instinct, and was usually "to the fore" when war might be imminent. He rushed after the retreating crab, and, forgetting that his feet were not armed as usual, he set one smartly down upon the crab's back.

For once a shell-fish had the advantage over a Manse boy! The worm will turn; so did the crab, and seized Bill's bare foot in his nippers. I am afraid Bill would have had a very bad time of it, if Harry had not come to his rescue, and by thrusting a stick between its claws obliged the crab to let go. Before that was accomplished Bill's foot had been severely injured: and,

besides learning a lesson he is not likely soon to forget, he was prevented from going with his brothers in the *Tangie.*

Then, at the last moment, Svein Holtum found excuse in his father's need of rest for remaining at home to assist him; but even when *he* was out of it there was a goodly party left. The Yarl, Mr. Congreve, Ned, Garth, Eric and Harry Mitchell, Tom Holtum, and Gloy, with Tammy, "for ballast" (the mirth-loving lads affirmed). Tammy was heavy and sedate.

"We'll sail under *your* flag, Fred, my boy," said the Yarl; so when the *Tangie* sped gracefully from Blaesound the Laird of Lunda's crest, embroidered on crimson silk by Isobel, and the property of Fred, floated from the yacht's mast-head proclaiming that men and boys who had known Mr. Garson as an ensample of all that is manly and upright would wear his colours and keep his motto, "*Je suis prêt*" (I am ready), before them.

CHAPTER XXIV.

FARÖE.

"WELL, I *am* disappointed!" These were the first words which came from the *Tangie's* deck as she sailed into Thorshaven, and it was Garth Halsen who spoke. Ever since Farö had been reached they had all been scrupulous not to utter any expression of disappointment, and had expatiated on the majesty of the cliffs, the clear azure of the sea, the vast multitude of birds (as the yacht slipped along the coast); but no one had given expression to feelings of rapture such as St. Magnus Bay, or the Flugga Skerries, or Midyell Voe would have evoked.

The truth is, that Farö is very different from Shetland. The rocks of Farö are much higher than those of the Shetland Isles, some of the precipices attaining a sheer height of nearly 3000 feet; but the picturesque and varied outlines of that group are entirely wanting. The fiords which break the land up into such remarkable and beautiful forms, the holmes and stacks which stud the waters, the rich colours of the rocks, giving to the Shetland Isles something of the

beauty belonging to coral islands of the tropics, are all lacking in the sister group.

It was, therefore, not wonderful that our friends, expecting to see scenery like that from which they had come, were surprised and disappointed.

"It is very remarkable," said Mr. Congreve, "that archipelagos, so near to each other, should be of such different formation. I knew that Faröe was not so picturesque as Shetland, but I was not prepared for such a great difference as this. Those even ranges of stupendous precipices produce a dreary effect after the eye grows accustomed to their height. The fiords are as straight as if they had been traced by lines."

"I am glad," said Garth, "that you feel with me. At first I was afraid national prejudice was blinding me."

"Plenty of birds about, anyhow," Harry struck in. He was always ready to make the best of everything, and find a good in everything. "I never saw anything like the numbers of gullimot, eider-duck, and the like, as are here."

"Faröe is a most important depôt for down, I believe. The people live in a great measure by it."

"Wretches! I wonder how many birds they murder every year. It is a wonder the poor things continue in such multitudes when that is the case."

"You condemn before hearing, Harry," Mr. Congreve rejoined. "The Faröese don't *kill* the birds more than any other people. The eider duck is strictly

protected. A naturalist like yourself should know that these birds deposit great quantities of down in their nests before laying their eggs. The peasants, I believe, take a portion of this down away, and the birds immediately replace it. This robbery may be done twice, or even thrice, and it does not hurt the bird. I understand the whole matter is under State management. They have a paternal sort of government in the islands. They manage their own affairs, and only appeal to Denmark when extreme cases require it."

"I wish we had that kind of thing in Shetland," said the Yarl. "Scottish laws don't suit us in the least. What's life to one man is death to another, and what a Celt or Scot thrives upon, is not what a Shetlander desires."

"What are all those boats about?" Eric exclaimed, drawing the attention of all to a fleet of boats evidently preparing for some unusual expedition.

"Suppose we go nearer and see?"

"Ask our pilot," Harry suggested.

The *Tangie* had been boarded some little time before and brought into the haven by a crew of Faröese fishermen, who, upon inquiry, informed Garth that a school of whales had been seen near the entrance to a fiord close by, and the people were going to hunt them.

The capture of whales is also under State regulations, and our friends were very anxious to see the performance, or share in it if they might.

With all speed their request was sent to the chief authority, and a frank permission to follow the boats in their own vessel was given, with the condition that they must take no share in the proceedings, but be merely spectators.

"Oh, bother take their regulations!" Mr. Halsen exclaimed, forgetful of his previously expressed desire to live under a patriarchal government. "In *our* islands anybody may hunt on sea or land as he likes."

"British rule has a few advantages," Mr. Congreve said quietly, and then they all laughed, and the Yarl admitted that he had not been very consistent.

And now let us imagine ourselves in the sloop following at a respectful distance the flotilla of boats which went away to the fiord in perfect order and silence.

When they rounded a headland the whales were seen sporting around the entrance to the fiord, and evidently having some thoughts of entering it; but as their leader had not apparently made up *his* mind to do so, they were taking a little play meanwhile.

The boats (under the direction of one man) were ordered to form in a semicircle outside the herd, and this was done silently and expeditiously. Then at a given signal the fleet rowed towards the whales, men shouting, rattling tins, and creating as much noise as possible, which terrified the creatures of course, and caused them to rush away—just the thing they were wanted to do.

Once or twice they headed for the open sea, but

instantly a number of boats were thrown in their way, and they turned again. The chase was admirably managed, and called forth loud exclamations of approval from the *Tangie's* crew. The greater number of the boats were kept "in line," and never allowed to move out of their position in the chase, but slowly and steadily closed in upon the herd, driving it nearer and nearer to the mouth of the fiord. The rest of the little fleet came behind them, ready to throw their force upon any part of the line which the game strove to break through.

These "caa-ing" whales are led by chiefs, and, like a flock of sheep, follow where one leads. It was, therefore, chiefly important to prevent the leaders from reaching free fields of ocean, and the discipline maintained by the hunters did this. After some hours of patient, vigilant "caa-ing" (driving), the big bull of the herd turned in the fiord followed by the whole school, and soon afterwards the helpless leviathans were floundering in shallow water at the mercy of man.

Man knows no mercy in such circumstances; and no creatures are so defenceless against him as those whales when trapped in a bay or fiord.

The work of butchery began when the animals were aground, and though it was a scene of exciting interest, there was so much to make it repulsive that Mr. Congreve proposed, and the Yarl agreed, that the *Tangie* should return to Thorshaven without waiting to see the end of a whale-hunt.

"Can you tell us what is the meaning of Faröe, and how these islands got that name, Garth?" Harry asked.

"English authorities," our scholar answered modestly, "tell us that the word comes from the Scandinavian 'faar' (sheep), and 'ö' or 'öe' (island), and that our own Fair Isle means the same thing. But I sometimes fancy the words have become so corrupted that their original meaning has been lost. I really can't see why the Faröes and Fair Isle should be specially designated sheep-islands."

"Then what would you substitute as the more probable derivation?" Mr. Congreve asked.

"It may have come from the Gaelic 'faire' (a watch or sentinel, having reference to watch-towers). Many Gaelic terms are closely allied to Scandinavian ones, and probably came from the same root. But I should be more inclined to think that Gaelic 'faire' and Danish 'fâröe' were originally Norse 'Vaar' or 'Vair.' Both these words survive in Shetland still. The first means a guide, or to guide, and is applied to rocks which stand out conspicuously from their fellows as sentinel-rocks. The second means simply a skerry much frequented by birds.

"Now, you see, the Faröe Islands are much loftier than any of its neighbours,—there is nothing on the coast of Norway 'a patch' upon them. Then we know Fair Isle is one of the loftiest of the Shetlands, and is certainly a most conspicuous landmark.

"Both Faröe and Fair Isle are remarkable for their bird-life; so don't you think it is more likely that the Norse men named them 'Vaaroe' or 'Vairoy' (tower or bird-islands) rather than after 'faire' (sheep)?"

"Good for you, old boy!" Harry exclaimed, clapping Garth on the shoulder, and the scientist smiled approvingly as he said, "It sounds a more rational theory, certainly."

"And more like the Northmen," added Mr. Halsen with a snort of contempt. "Sheep! what did the sea-kings know or care about *sheep* when they were sailing the seas discovering and naming new lands! When they sighted the Faröes, covered with crowds of birds, they naturally called these islands 'Vairoes,' and when they got sight of Fair Isle, standing like a giant sentinel half way between Shetland and Orkney, they dubbed it 'Vaaroy.'"

"I am glad we are all agreed to accept Garth's explanation," laughed Mr. Congreve, "but I dare not hope that linguists will accept his derivation. They prefer to adopt far-fetched theories to plain facts."

"We don't mind if that pleases them best," remarked Harry, with that lofty indifference to the opinions of the world at large which characterises Shetlanders, "only *we* know better; and it's a pity they should not allow themselves to be instructed."

This speech, delivered with great unction, created much mirth. And so the party amused themselves with talk and fun, in which instructive matter was

considerably mixed with "chaff," until they were anchored at Thorshaven.

They were received in the little town with the most frank and cordial hospitality, and soon found it was not difficult to make the Faröese understand their Shetlandic. They found the natives extremely like their own peasantry, except in one very marked particular. The pleasing manners of the Shetlander has a touch of servility in it, born of that oppression under which the islanders groaned under their Scottish Earls, and which taught them to hate a Scot as one hates poison.

The Faröese have been blessed with a species of Home Rule, and a Protectorate, which have taught them to respect themselves, and have given to their character a dignified independence which is exhibited in their bearing.

They are polite and obliging like the Danes, and like the Dane and Norwegian, they remember that they are sons of a lordly race; so that every peasant feels himself to be a gentleman by birth. This gives to the people a refinement and ease of manner, as well as dignity, which impressed our young friends very much, and drew from Mr. Congreve frequent words of commendation.

A fortnight was happily spent in cruising among the islands, and visiting the natives with whom the lads "chummed up" with their wonted confiding impetuosity. Their frankness and generosity won golden opinions for them, and they were overwhelmed with invitations, as well as gifts of every description. Garth, in especial,

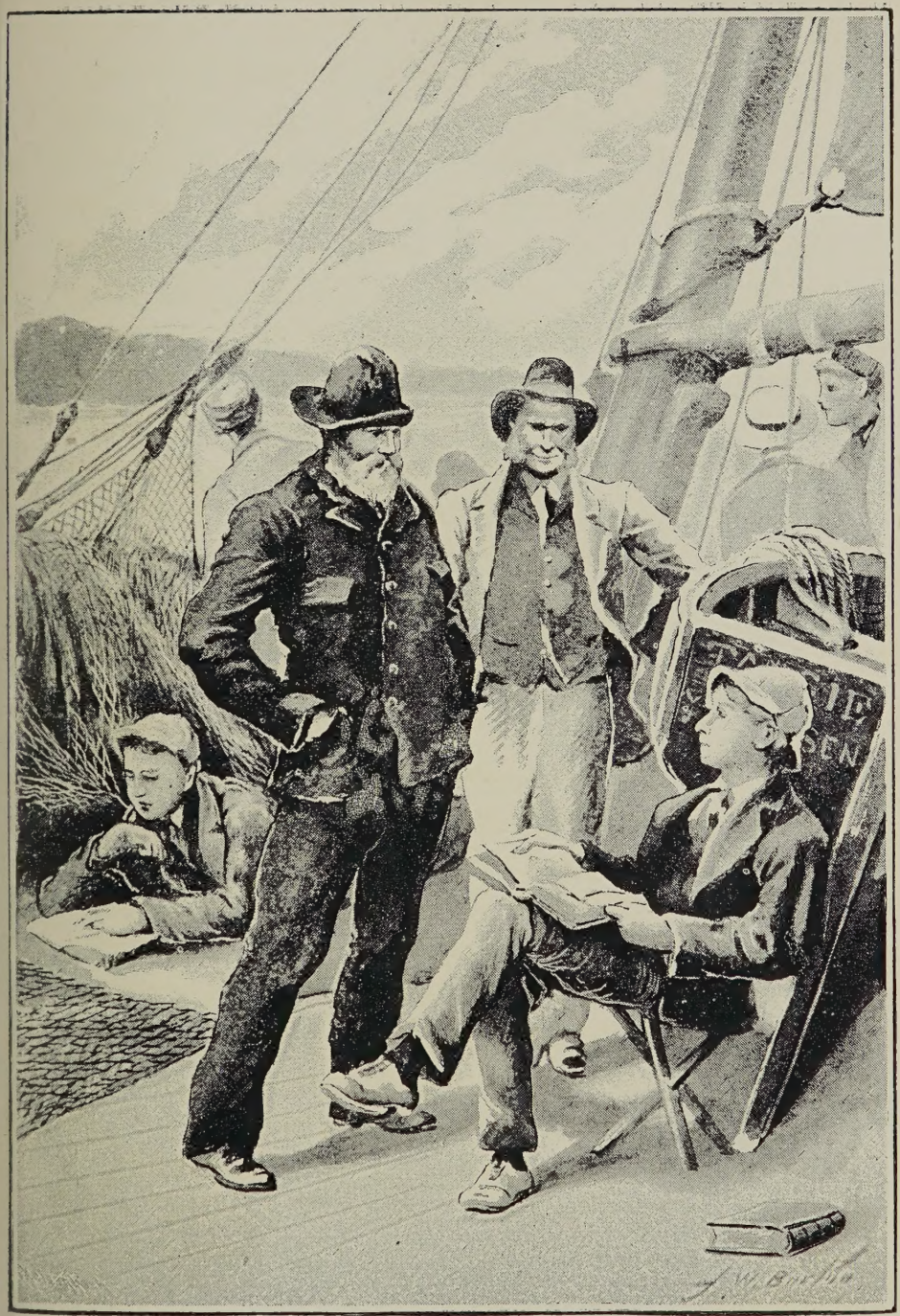
was made rich in "specimens." Bird-skins, rare eggs, quaint wooden dishes, old armour, silver ornaments wrought "by hand," and curios defying description. But what put him almost beside himself with joy was two ancient volumes of Norse lore which a venerable pastor presented; and from the moment these books came into the lad's possession he became oblivious to everything else, until he had relieved his feelings by translating one of the many marvellous legends the books contained into a sort of prose poetry which was his favourite mode of expression.

"What have you got there, boy?" his father asked.

The excursion was over then, and the *Tangie* was starting on the return voyage to Shetland. All the good-byes were over. Eric and Harry and Tom and Ned had been profuse in promises to repeat their visit "some day." Mr. Congreve had left very substantial proofs of his gratitude among the people. Mr. Halsen had almost lamed his right hand with "parting-grips," and Garth had narrowly escaped being smothered in the embraces of the warm-hearted Faröese. But it was all over, and the yacht was rapidly leaving Faröe behind when Mr. Halsen put that question to Garth, who was sitting in a quiet corner putting the finishing touches to his MS.

"I've been turning a piece of that glorious old book into English, father," he replied, lifting his rapt face.

"Let's hear what you've made of it," the Yarl said; and Mr. Congreve added, "No better moment for a Scald to speak than the present."



"'I've been turning a piece of that glorious old book into English, father,' he replied."
—*Page* 238.

"Oh yes, that will be jolly!" Harry cried. He was sprawling at his length on the deck, and had been vainly trying to fix his attention on a modern sea-story which lay open before him. "This kind of thing," he added, flinging his book to Tom, whose property it was, "don't fit in with the *old* flavour of Faröe and its waters. Let's have your Saga, Garth."

The sun was shining in a cloudless sky, the waves were smooth as glass, the gentle winds of summer were carrying the *Tangie* easily along. All on board were in a *dolce far niente* state of being, and willing to listen.

"It's the story of a Viking's voyage," said Garth. "Does anybody here need to be told the difference between a Viking and a sea-king?"

"*Is* there a difference, my boy?" the Yarl asked.

"I've prefaced the legend with this explanation," answered the youthful author, and he read—

"*Viking* has no connection with 'king,' as is generally supposed. It comes from 'vik,' a wick or bay. When Norsemen rebelled, or wished to evade customary and tyrannous dues they put off from remote 'viks,'—not lawful harbours, where much ceremony attended the departure and return of the sea-kings. Thus the Vikinger became outlaws and pirates; but it was never asserted that they were less noble than their more law-abiding neighbours."

"That's a good preface anyway," said Harry when Garth paused. "Now fire away, old chap;" and thus encouraged, Garth began his story of a Viking's voyage.

CHAPTER XXV.

A VIKING'S VOYAGE.

"ART thou a Viking?" the men of Faröe asked.

"I am perforce a Viking, but I come in peace," answered Herjolf.

"The good faith of a Viking we trust. Tell us thy tale."

"I have sailed to many kingdoms; I have found new lands, but I bring no plunder home. I take no captives. I merely receive the gifts which kindly hands bestow, and in giving aid to the thrall I am enriched by his willing service. I follow the sun, from whence descended Odin, from whence shall return Balder our Prince of Peace.

"Because I go not out to conquer, nor to bring home spoil, the sea-kings deny me honours of departure. I may not launch my vessel from a lawful harbour, because I refuse tribute to a tyrant. Thus I can only put to sea from some sequestered vik; can find shelter on my return only in the same obscure haven. I come and go as the pirates do.

"Not for *me* the holy sacrifice and blessing-hands

when my ship sets her prow to the sea. Not for *me* the song of triumph when my bark rides home. Thus I am a Viking.

"Yet I have dreams which tell that my peaceful voyages of discovery may yet be of more value than the bloody conquests of the sea-kings, and I feel my soul more deeply thrilled by the low-breathed benediction than it can ever be by the shriek of vanquished foes. I love not Thor. I worship Balder! But mists hang over the sun, and when the night-birds scream, when the storm-fiends haunt the billows, when the mighty Thunderer—even Thor whom ye worship—speaks, and the north wind raves, I pray to Him who dwelleth in light, and I ask for a sign. I say, 'How long, O Balder the Beautiful! shall men wait for thy coming again? How long shall the clouds hide thee? Is there not a land where thy sun shines for ever?' He gives no sign. Balder hears me not perchance, for I am the humblest of his worshippers. But his sun rises and sets daily behind the clouds. It bids me follow, and I follow! Sometimes, as now, it says 'wait,' and I wait."

They made Herjolf welcome to Faröe, though they had not known a sea-king who followed Balder rather than Thor, though they had not known a Viking who was not a pirate.

They had heard of Herjolf as one "possessed," and as such he was safe to come and go where he listed. Men called him a dreamer, a madman, a scald, a pro-

phet. They smiled at his words; they accorded him hospitality. So he rested in Faröe many days. Then he said, "The spirit of the Sun is upon me! It warms my blood, and stirs my limbs. 'Onward' is its morning song. 'To the west' is its evening whisper.

"Thus ever shall it move the worshippers of Balder, Prince of Peace. Thus ever shall his followers be stirred to carry tidings of him from East to West. With his sun shall the news go. I must follow the sun."

The men of Faröe heard, and laughing said—"Follow thy dreams, O dreamer! Yet, because thy visions harm us not, take our blessing with thee."

Then Vala, a sibyl of those Isles, brought from her mystic cave three sacred ravens. They were descended from the bird which Odin brought to Norland, and they could speak the language of Scalds and Valkyrur.

"I give thee," said Vala, "those birds consecrated to Odin, to Thor, and to Balder, the three most mighty gods.

"Henceforth thou shalt be known as Herjolf Hrafn;[1] and the story of thy wanderings shall evermore be associated with the sacred bird.

"I know that thou hast dedicated thyself to the service of the All-father's Son, golden-haired Balder, whose smile is the light of earth. Against him the Thunderer wars, and I may not tell thee which shall rule over men, nor which shall guide thee to the haven of thy hopes.

[1] Hrafn, raven.

"But when Faröe is left far behind thy bark, see thou let fly those ravens three, and follow thou as they lead.

"First send the bird I dedicated to Odin, as is most meet, for he is the All-father. Next, the bird given to Thor, for he has lent power to thy nation, and they make his hammer resound in many lands. Last, the bird sacred to Balder, whom thou lovest, of whom Scalds sing, and for whom women weep. Thereafter the Fates will show thee what they have willed. The gods be about thy bark, Herjolf Hrafn."

So Herjolf Hrafn sailed from Faröe, and, as he sailed, he hearkened to the words of the ravens, who talked to each other in the Runic speech.

When the lofty cliffs of Stromöe were wrapped in the veil of distance, and morning was breaking over the eastern horizon as the sun leaped from the sea like a young giant going forth to conquer, the Viking bade the bird of Odin fly.

It rose from his hand, stately and slow, and hovered over the ship for a short time; then stooped and settled on the rigging, and would not depart from thence.

"Odin is with us, and will *be* with us," said the Vikinger, "but the way we are to follow, he leaves for another to show."

Then the bird of Thor was sent out, and eager eyes watched to mark the course of its flight.

The raven rose sullenly over the vessel, and croaked

as ravens do. It had lost the language of Scalds and Valkyrur in a moment. It wheeled around and around the ship, and then soared away back to Thorshaven, leaving the Vikinger perplexed and dismayed.

"Are we then to return from our quest?" they asked of their leader, who answered—"Nay! for heard ye not, the bird could only *croak* when liberated? Its supernatural power had left it, as a sign that we were not to be guided by the omens of Thor."

Then Herjolf Hrafn liberated the bird of Balder.

Strong of wing, exultant of spirit, the last raven rose steadily over the vessel's prow, which pointed West, and as it flew it called, as the sibyl taught, "So help me, Æsir!" (the gods). For a few moments he hovered over the ship, then straight as an arrow to mark, he led to the West, and the Vikinger followed rejoicing, while, ever as they sailed, they sang—

"Skinfaxi is the steed that drags
The golden car of day:
The fleetest steed of steeds is he,
With ever-shining mane:
And Balder rides upon the car
He guides with lightning rein;
But none may look upon his face
For clouds, and mist, and spray.

"Skinfaxi leaps from eastern lands
And bears the golden car
Across Valhalla's vaulted floor.
The ghosts rejoice to see
Fair Balder mount the morning clouds,
His tresses streaming free.

He rides to reign by western waves,
He is the Viking's 'Var.'"[1]

When night fell the raven came and rested on the ship, but with dawn he flew on again ever calling, "So help me, Æsir!" And that evening the Snœ-holme (snow-island) appeared before them. Its ghostly white mountains rose to the skies emitting showers of lava and smoke-wreaths. The hills were girdled with green woods, the plains sent forth jets of boiling water, the earth quaked, and the heavens were clouded. No human beings peopled the island, and Herjolf Hrafn thought it was a sacred spot. He rested there many days, and some of the Vikinger believed that there was no more western land than Iceland. Some became disheartened, and secretly made another ship, and so sailed back to Norway where none would credit their tale; because men are more prone to believe that which never was than that which may be.

But Herjolf Hrafn still listened to the Spirit of the Sun, and again he sailed to the West; sending forth the raven as before, believing ever that the gods were with him, hoping that the "perfect light" should shine upon him at last; and so he followed the Sun, not knowing that shortly afterwards Iceland became peopled by his people, never dreaming that the Snœ-holme which he discovered should become the storehouse of Scandinavian history, the keeper of her ancient fame.

[1] Guide.

By and by the Vikinger came to a land covered with delightful verdure, for the season was summer, and the virgin snows of winter had slipped into the sea, leaving the earth in the garments of motherhood, and Herjolf called that country "Grön-laand," and there he remained many months, teaching the savages he found there to worship the god of Day and Peace.

These people told him of lands beyond theirs, and they showed him delicious fruits, and curious things they had brought from thence, which confirmed Herjolf's belief in a western world where the sunlight was never dimmed by such clouds as swept his Norland skies.

But again some of the Vikinger thought they had journeyed far enough, and they made them canoes, and straggled back to Iceland, where they found sea-kings of Norway establishing a nation.

The following which left Grön-laand with Herjolf Hrafn was a small one; but the Vikinger were inspired by the spirit of their chief, and so they sailed as the raven led, south west, touching at many lands, seeing many marvellous sights, encountering many dangers, and gradually reaching the tropics where the sun shines ever.

At last they came to a beautiful country, abounding in rich fruits and gold, "with birds and beasts good for food;" and there they lingered long, and they named that land Yucatán.[1]

[1] Supposed to be Mexico.

They found there a gentle, simple race, to whom the story of Balder was no new gospel, for they worshipped the Sun—not as fierce warriors did, not as the strong-natured tribes of a debased and degenerate people did, not as the later invaders of their country did, but as reverent, tender souls should do, loving light and hating evil, and receiving into their simple minds such symbols of a higher faith as their uninstructed hearts could comprehend.

In that sunny clime the hardy Norsemen learned many new things; but the restless spirit of adventure forbade them to fix their dwelling there.

They cruised over these cerulean seas, resting betimes on some coral isle, amid gorgeous foliage, and under glowing skies, tasting fruits delicious as the food of the gods, hearkening to the melody of winged creatures bright as gems, bathing in waves warm and invigorating as flowing mead.

"Surely *this* is the home of Balder?" said the Vikinger to Herjolf Hrafn; but he pointed to the western skies.

"See where Balder rides, ever westward," said he; "and I know he gives to us his followers the Spirit of the Sun. Onward! Westward! We can but obey the high-born impulse, and go as Balder goes. As He wills so let us do."

Herjolf Hrafn came not back to Scandinavia. A few of the Vikinger who were with him in Yucatán and in the "Blessed Isles"[1] returned to their homes to tell of

[1] West Indies.

such marvels as no man would credit. But their chief and the raven (they said) were still going westward!

And so Herjolf's voyages were doubted, or partially forgotten, and in the lapse of time came to be regarded as entirely mythical. We, of modern days, know that he followed a true and noble instinct, and, perhaps it was given him to know, as through a glass darkly—ere he died—that his Balder was the type of one who is the Light of Earth, the true object of worship, the true God to obey, and to seek after, the Prince of Peace who will yet return to vanquish the powers of night and evil.

Perhaps, in some vision, Herjolf Hrafn foresaw that the same spirit which had led *him* should become the ruling passion of his race, and should carry the sons of the sea-kings on a like quest; and that a nation—sprung from the old Norse rovers—should be moved to follow the sun, should people the West, and plant in its furthest lands the banner of the Prince of Peace, known of old as Balder the Beautiful.

Of course the audience greeted Garth's story with much applause; but after that subsided Harry remarked, "I don't want to appear very critical, and the story is a prime one of course, but—do you call it a *translation,* old boy? It strikes me that there is more of Garth Halsen and the nineteenth century in it than you wish to appear, eh?"

Garth blushed, and, after a good deal of kindly dis-

cussion, he admitted that his own imagination must be credited with the greater part of the legend.

"You have caught the spirit of it very well, though," said Mr. Congreve: and then Ned Langton remarked, "Does not Balder's history bear a wonderful resemblance to that of Christ?"

"In all mythologies," answered the scientist, "there appears a figure of Christ, and I do not doubt humanity has always been given the germs of our belief in that way—and preparation, as it were, for the more spiritual faith of modern days."

When the *Tangie* approached the Shetland coast it was determined to have some dredging before going to harbour; so her course was directed round the north point to the east of Lunda. While engaged in their dredging operations the Yarl's attention was drawn to some vessels which had hove in sight, and his spyglass was instantly directed towards them.

"What have you sighted, sir?" Harry asked; and everybody on board was on their feet in a moment when the Yarl replied—"A fleet of Dutch Busses coming this way."

All were on the *qui vive* at once, the two strangers because they had never seen those old-world, picturesque fishing-vessels before, our lads because they expected some fun with the Dutchmen, the Yarl and Tammy for reasons of their own, which we shall hear more of later.

There were about twenty Busses, and they were

evidently steering for Shetland, where it is their custom to pay periodical visits.

"We used to do all our commercial business with Holland and Belgium long ago," Mr. Halsen told his English guest, "and the Shetlanders haven't forgotten those old ties; but our connection with Scotland (to whom we owe nothing good) has made it impossible to traffic where we wish."

"Except when we do it *sub rosâ*," laughed Eric, "and then we get nabbed and punished for smuggling."

"Tuts, lad!" the Yarl exclaimed pettishly, "*I* never call it smuggling when it's merely getting a few comforts for one's own use. If we did it for trading purposes then I might say differently; but for the use of our own islanders, who are as poor as poor can be, and ought not to be so heavily taxed, I say it's a shame to debar us from doing a little private domestic business with our old friends for the sake of putting a few pounds into the exchequer of wealthy England. However, let the Government cutter—who no doubt is hovering somewhere on the skirts of yon Dutch fleet—punish whom she may nab," and the old gentleman laughed, as the remembrance of many an adventure in which Her Majesty's officers had been outwitted by the Shetland fishers came back to his mind.

CHAPTER XXVI.

OLD ALLIES FROM HOLLAND.

As the Dutchmen drew near the *Tangie* hailed them, and some of our friends boarded the nearest Buss. They found (as had been conjectured) that the fishing-fleet was on its way to Lerwick, ostensibly for provisions, water, &c., but in reality to do a bit of smuggling. This they admitted frankly to Mr. Halsen, whom some of the Dutchmen recognised, and they were quite confiding in their communications to him in the presence of his friends, to the no small amusement of Mr. Congreve.

The Yarl was informed that a revenue cutter was keeping an eye on the vessels, and would probably escort them into Lerwick harbour; and at the very moment it was demonstrated that "Rule Britannia" was keeping lynx-eyed watch over England's rights, for the *Teaser* came down to the *Tangie* as soon as it was seen that she was parleying with a Buss, and sent a boat to overhaul her.

We may readily imagine the disgust with which old Halsen received Her Majesty's officers on board his

yacht. His native courtesy deserted him, and he stood sullenly by while the revenue men ransacked the sloop, and he scarcely touched his hat when the officer in command bade him good-bye, saying civilly, "You must excuse us in the discharge of our duty."

"I suppose," said Mr. Congreve when the men had gone, "that they are obliged to be very sharp, and probably many sloops as innocent-looking as ours carries on a contraband trade in your waters."

"For all their sharpness they are no match for the Shetlanders," answered Mr. Halsen with a kind of exultation. "See, our haaf-boats are 'speaking' the Dutchmen as they pass them. No traffic but that of tongues is going on under the *Teaser's* nose, you may be sure; and no smuggling will be done in Lerwick while the Busses lie *there*, yet before many days they will return to their fishing-ground with lightened cargoes, and our islands will be all the richer for——"

"Stop! stop! my friend! for goodness sake!" cried Mr. Congreve, laughing heartily though, "I am a loyal Briton, and pay my taxes honestly. I beseech you do not make me a party to such trading."

The Yarl stared, and then laughed too. He was so accustomed to talking in that way about smuggling that it had not occurred to him that his guest might entertain different views. The subject was changed, and the Dutchmen forgotten in part, while home, and the early meeting with the dear ones there, was discussed. But as the *Tangie* drew near Lunda, Ned

Langton asked—he had been watching the Busses and could not understand their tactics—"What *are* those fellows about? They are sailing here and there in the most erratic manner, and I notice that they have straggled a good deal instead of drawing together as one might have supposed they would do when nearing harbour."

Harry drew Ned aside and quietly explained that the vessels meant to knock about till dusk, then the greater number would seek Lerwick harbour, which would oblige the revenue cutter to do the same. As soon as she was safe in Bressay Sound the remaining Busses would seek the voes, or meet the haaf-boats coming in, and smuggling could then be safely accomplished, for before tidings could reach the Queen's servants (supposing informants were on the spot) or they could discover the missing Dutchmen, the contraband cargoes would be hidden in peat bogs and crevices of the rocks beyond hope of discovery.

"I should think," said Ned, "that it would require as many revenue cutters as there are Busses to prevent smuggling; for your voes and viks are splendidly adapted for the purpose of a game of hide-and-seek; and it must be quite easy for a vessel that knows her way to evade a pursuer who is distracted by having to watch the tricks of more than one."

"Uncle Hoskuld," Tom Holtum said, "tells a capital story of how the officers were once thrown off the scent through the ingenuity of a peasant woman: but perhaps you are like Mr. Congreve, and don't want to

encourage or countenance such proceedings. Any way it was a good story."

"Let us hear it by all means," said Ned good-naturedly, "only you must know I go in for obedience to the law."

Tom nodded. "So do we of course; and it isn't the *smuggling* we approve of: it's the—the risk, and the fun, and the diamond-cut-diamond sort of game. You see a fellow must have brains and courage and quick wit to be a successful smuggler. But when the thing is done, the adventure and excitement over, who cares for the 'stuff' itself? I'd not mind going right away and paying the duty down, after I had shown the officers that I was more 'cute than they."

Ned shook his head, but said—"What above the woman who 'did' the custom-house?"

"Oh, well, this was it. Some fellows landed a lot of stuff at a lonely place on the west side of Burra Isle, and took it to a house there. A sneak went and informed about the landing of the smuggled goods, but could not tell *where* it had been hidden. However, the officer and his men came along to search, and began of course with the houses. They ransacked two or three, and then came to one where a poor woman was lying ill in bed. As soon as she heard that the officer (a kind-hearted Englishman, well-known throughout the islands as a sharp man in the way of his duty, and a generous one in private life) was 'but,' she instantly begged that he would come 'ben' and

see her. Captain Sicklemore was ushered into the darkened apartment where the woman lay propped up with pillows, wrapped in shawls, and to all appearance very ill. 'Oh, dear sir!' she said when he came to the bedside, 'I'm blithe tae see you, for I've heard o' your goodness tae them that's puir and sick, and I'm that this day. Ye ken the like o' me can hae little tae bring back strength wi', and the doctor he said if I could get a peerie corn o' wine it wad revive me better than ony medicine.'

"'That you shall have,' the frank, unsuspecting Sicklemore answered. He talked for a few moments with her, sent his men on to the next house, followed them in a short time, and after an unsuccessful raid on the hamlet, returned to his sloop, from whence he sent the invalid some wine and other comforts. Her bed, I need not tell you, I suppose, was chiefly composed of the smuggled goods which Sicklemore was searching for!"

Ned Langton did not enjoy the story as much as Tom had expected, and was even obtuse enough to remark that he didn't see the fun of telling whoppers and stealing—for stealing and smuggling *he* thought very much the same sort of thing.

By that time the voe of Collaster was reached, and as the sun was setting behind the hills of Westervoe, our yacht dropped anchor near Dr. Holtum's house.

Glad were the greetings exchanged we may be sure. Eric and Harry were off directly they landed to the

Manse, eager to be with their parents and pour into their sympathetic hearing the story of their delightful trip to Faroe.

Fred Garson had sighted the *Tangie,* and was at Collaster to welcome his friends; also—by his mother's desire—to invite as many as chose to come to the Ha'.

Amy's visit to the Holtums had been finished a few days before, and she was at Blaesound; therefore her father, Garth, and Mr. Halsen accepted the young Laird's invitation, and after spending a few hours at Collaster proceeded to the Ha'.

"I'll come back for my housekeeper to-morrow," said the Yarl, caressing Gerta. "I must get back to Broch as soon as possible now; so any and all who are coming with us must be in readiness to sail at noon 'the morn.'"

And at "noon the morn" the old gentleman presented himself at Collaster again. The Ha' had lost its chief attraction for him; and indeed it was painful to his kindly heart to be in his lost friend's house, which seemed to the Yarl haunted by the presence of the Laird, who had been his valued adviser and comrade, and to whom he had looked up with profound respect, although Mr. Garson had been many years his junior. Fred accompanied Mr. Halsen and Garth, and, after consigning them to the doctor's hospitality, returned to Blaesound to look after his guests, for Mr. Congreve had decided to remain there for a week or two, with his daughter.

"Who is coming with us to Burra Isle?" the Yarl asked.

"Only your little housekeeper, just at present," answered Mrs. Holtum. "I can't spare my boys, to tell the truth. I am a little selfish, and, now that the vacation is nearly ended, I want Svein all to myself for a little bit."

Even Gerta could enter into the mother's feelings, and agreed that the small portion of the holidays left ought to be given to the mothers. So she contentedly allowed herself to be shipped on board the *Tangie*, only saying as she bade good-bye—

"You'll come to Broch one short day before you leave?"

"You bet I'll come," said Svein.

As they were sailing home Garth said, "I am afraid, Gerta dear, that father and I are awfully selfish in taking you with us when your heart is at Collaster."

She did not reply all at once. They were sitting in a quiet nook all by themselves, and the Yarl was steering, talking very earnestly to Tammy as he did so. Nobody was attending to what Gerta and Garth might be saying.

Presently Gerta spoke, with the prettiest blush imaginable.

"No, Garth, it isn't selfish in the least. You and uncle need somebody to look after your housekeeping, and to be a sort of sister and daughter to you. But I want to tell you a very great secret, Trow."

She paused, and blushed yet more, and Garth—after giving her one quick glance—smiled, put his hand on hers, and answered, "Yes, Gerta! I'll treasure *your* secrets, dear."

"I want *you* to know," the girl went on softly, "because you have been so much my chum—and frater, you know, that—that—Svein will want me to—to come from Broch some day; and we—we are going—by and by—to do up the old house of Melsetter, where the Bruces used to live, and we—we shall stay there. Then the doctor will not require to go to that island, and other places, for Svein will look after the patients there. He will be his father's assistant and partner."

"And *you* will be Svein's assistant and partner! A very nice arrangement! But, Gerta, what will Broch be without you?"

"I expect my Trow will have to start out on his own account—by and by. Oh, years after *this* time! You know, Garth, I am talking of a time which is a long way from now—you will have to look out for—a wife, Trow! Yes, that is what you've got to do after you are famous. You must bring a nice little lady to Broch to be in my place."

It was Garth's turn to blush, and he did, like any girl; but Gerta's words were remembered, and in the lad's heart they sowed the seed of a dream which became the hope of his manhood, leading to the happiest results.

"But I have not told you *all* my secrets," Gerta

resumed; "while you have been at Faröe Amy and I have been making our plans. Mr. Congreve has been talking to Amy a great deal, it seems, while they have been together again, and she and I have put *our* heads together too, so now you shall hear the result. Amy is to stay the winter again at Broch, if you will agree to go with her father to London. A fair exchange is no robbery, Trow; and if *she* stays with *your* father, it is fair enough that you should go and do your best to entertain her respected parent in London."

"Is that what Mr. Congreve wishes?" Garth asked slowly.

"Yes. *He* began it; but I will acknowledge that both Amy and I have seconded and thirded him in the matter. We both think it a first-rate plan, only I fear we shall miss our boy dreadfully," and Gerta put her free hand affectionately on his, which clasped her other.

"I must know what my father wishes," said Garth, his heart bounding as he spoke, for he felt sure that his father would offer no objections, and he should be allowed to go.

"I expect Uncle Hoskuld will first say, 'Nonsense;' and the next moment will add, 'The very thing.' I am sure we may count upon his agreeing," said Gerta.

"But would I be doing the right thing to—leave him?"

"It won't be 'leaving' him, Trow. It will only be doing what your genius bids you. What is best for you and for him; what is most likely to advance you

in a worldly point of view. Oh yes, Garth, you must go!"

The couple were about to call the Yarl to their confab, when they observed that his attention was entirely engrossed by a sail approaching.

"It is one of those ridiculous Dutchmen," said Garth. "We fell in with them on the way home; and here comes one no doubt to do a bit of business at Broch. I wish father would let them go about their own business. He will get himself into trouble one of these days, with caring so much for the excitement of smuggling."

"Smuggling!" Gerta exclaimed; "you don't mean to say that Uncle Hoskuld goes in for that sort of thing?"

"Hush, Gerta, he may hear us. It is very absurd, of course, and wrong into the bargain; but I am afraid father's sympathy is all with the islanders and their old friends; and all against the officers of our Queen in this matter."

"Well, I *am* surprised," Gerta answered.

CHAPTER XXVII

RATHER "MIXED."

"WOULD you like to see the inside of a Buss, Gerta?" her uncle asked, as the *Tangie* lay-to, in order to allow the Dutchman to come near enough for communication.

"I think I should. Are you going on board that creature?"

"Well, I want to warn them to keep out of Burrawick, or our men will get into trouble—and I can do that best by boarding them, so if you like to come with me I shall be delighted."

"Why should our people get into trouble, father?" Garth inquired; and a cloud came over the Yarl's frank face as he answered—

"Fred Garson told me that a messenger has been sent to Lerwick with information to the authorities that a number of Dutchies are coming to the North Isles: so I expect Smithers will find out that he is being hoodwinked."

"How so?" Garth asked, and his father—evidently very familiar with the dodges employed in such a case—explained.

"The vessels now in Lerwick probably have nothing of any value beyond fishing-gear on board. Those who are 'on business' have scattered themselves among the Isles."

"How in the world did Fred, or anybody in Lunda, find out what was going to be done?"

"No doubt Tammy was told of it by the Dutchmen we met yesterday, and he, of course, sent the news around Lunda."

"It seems mean of any one to go and tell," Gerta ventured to remark, and her uncle, pleased that she said so, replied—

"So *I* think, my dear. But people have different ways of looking at the same thing, and Fred has chosen to feel and speak on this matter of smuggling in a very extreme manner."

"He feels himself in an important position," Garth ventured to say, "and he wants not only to do right himself, but help the peasants to do right. He has a hard task before him."

"Anyhow—right or wrong—he considered it his duty to lodge information, as he is quite powerless to prevent what he calls 'illicit traffic' without assistance from the Powers that be. It was different when his father was Laird."

"*He* was a magistrate himself," Gerta remarked, "and the people knew they must not disobey him. Fred is too young to give orders as Mr. Garson did, and be obeyed."

"Ah, the Laird was a masterful man!" said old Halsen with a sigh; "a masterful man! as well as kind beyond telling. It will be long before Lunda sees his like again."

"Oh indeed, father," Garth exclaimed, "though we loved Mr. Garson, and knew that his place can't be easily filled, we must believe that Fred will be a worthy successor to his father."

"I hope so! The lad is *promising*, I'll allow," the Yarl admitted.

The vessels were near each other then; and Gerta, being wishful to see the Buss, got into the dingy with her uncle.

They were heartily welcomed on board the foreign ship. The big good-natured Hollanders clapped Mr. Halsen's shoulders till they ached, and jabbered around him like a flight of magpies.

They smiled affectionately on Gerta, and stroked her sleeves as she might have stroked a newly-caught pony, offering her at the same time all sorts of meat and drink, and very much surprised that she declined to accept any.

Indeed the simple-hearted creatures seemed so extremely hurt at her refusal to accept their hospitality, that the Yarl said, "My dear, you must take *something*, or you will offend them very much."

Upon that Gerta took a rusk and began to nibble it, which so delighted the men that they fetched out a basketful and insisted upon her taking these with her to the yacht.

"Have you got any 'sweetie-cooks' aboard?" Mr. Halsen asked.

"Sweetie-cooks" are a kind of ginger-cake made with honey, and are, of course, not chargeable with duty. Some of these cakes were forthcoming at once, and the Yarl bought half-a-dozen, which were put with the rusks in the boat; while Gerta was taken by the skipper to see over his little ship.

"I never saw anything so beautifully clean in all my life," she exclaimed, and when the Dutchmen were made to understand her words they were charmed. They deserved the compliment, for certainly they kept their Buss as tidy as an English man-of-war, and though their persons were as unlike that of a smart Jacky Tar as could well be, they were by no means indifferent sailors. Their loose frocks and wooden shoes gave them a very ungainly and land-lubberish appearance, I must confess; but when that is said the worst is said of them, for nowhere will you find a more kindly, cleanly, honest, and confiding community than the fisher people of Holland.

These men understand a little English, and the Shetlanders know a little Dutch; in truth the patois of the islands contains many Dutch words, so that "business" can be readily carried on, and the friendly relationship which existed in times past continues between them still. Altogether Gerta Bruce was very much delighted with her visit to the Buss, and could not by any means imagine that her new acquaintances,

so child-like in manner, so homely in appearance, were there for the express purpose of defying the law, and tempting others to break it too. She returned to the *Tangie* in high spirits, and amused Garth with details of her expedition until they reached home.

These two young persons had a great deal to see after on their return to Broch. There were the kitchens and Beana to visit, the museum and garden to inspect, the pets to greet, all their little properties to arrange and rearrange, with that delighted sense of being among one's *own*, free to do as one pleases there, which is only felt at home.

"How awfully nice it is being back in the old place," Garth remarked, when Gerta joined him under the fell-dyke, after they had "fixed" things to their satisfaction within doors. "I daresay, Gerta, you will call me a silly person that doesn't know his own mind, but I must just tell you that though I want to go to London, I shall not care to make my *home* anywhere but in Broch."

"I'd disown you if you dared to think of having a home anywhere else," she retorted. "Why, Burra Isle would not be habitable without *you*."

"In *some ways* it was not a happy place before *you* came to it, Gerta, dear," the lad answered musingly. "Yet—I think my—unhappiness—even my sense of loneliness—has made the place itself dearer to me than it might otherwise have been. I love the stones, the turf, the sea-tang on the shore, the waves that wash Burra Isle."

"It isn't a bad old place, take it all in all, Trow," Gerta said merrily; and he, shaking his head at her and pulling Fram's ears, replied, "You find it good enough meanwhile, Madame; but you don't want this island for your permanent residence." A pause, then he added, with a little hesitation, "Gerta, I wish you'd tell father what you told me about—the old house of Melsetter being restored—some day—for you and—Svein; if you have no objections, I'd like him—to know—soon—that you have—made up your mind about—your—future."

"But I am afraid he will be vexed, and why should I vex him now, when—*it* won't be for such a long, long time?"

"I'd like father to know soon," Garth repeated; and then, seeing that his cousin hesitated, he asked, "May *I* tell him?"

"Yes. I don't mind that so much," she answered.

Just then the Yarl joined them, and seating himself on the fell-dyke, remarked, "This is delightful, children! How those flowers and shrubs improve the place, to be sure! Ah, she is a witch of a sort, that strong-minded, blushing Miss Congreve! But it is nice to be at home by ourselves again, isn't it? We are quite content with each other, are we not, my dears? We don't want anybody else—do we?"

The cousins exchanged a mirthful glance of intelligence; and Gerta found it expedient to go and see after the tea, leaving Garth to answer the Yarl's questions.

"I am content with your company, father," the lad said in his soft musical voice, "and I am glad to feel that you don't want anybody better than myself! But we must not expect Gerta to feel as we do."

"What!" Mr. Halsen interrupted quickly; "is Gerta not happy with us? She came away with you very contentedly yesterday."

"Yes, she is contented and happy, *just now*."

"What do you mean, my boy?" the old gentleman asked with some anxiety, feeling sure, by Garth's manner, that something had to be revealed which he would not like, yet having no suspicion of what it might be.

Garth was very busy with Fram's ears for a minute; then he said quietly, "Gerta told me a little secret father; and she gave me leave to tell you. Some day Svein Holtum will be coming to Broch to ask us for our little housekeeper."

"You—don't—mean—to—say so!" the Yarl exclaimed, with a gasp between each word, and a great gulp after "so," which made his son smile in spite of his sympathy with the good old gentleman.

"It's quite true, father; and I am very glad about it."

"You are!" A long long pause, then, being somewhat recovered and exceedingly disgusted, Mr. Halsen said, "You are very glad! well *I* am very much the reverse: not because I am a selfish old brute, and want to keep the girl housekeeping for me—no! no! not that. But because—because I had—other hopes. And so, Garth, boy, *you* are pleased about it?"

"Yes," Garth answered, and looked at his father quite frankly. "I think," he went on, "that Gerta and Svein have been loving each other all their lives, and I am sure they are as happy as happy can be, so of course we *must* be pleased for their sakes."

"It has always been just my luck for things to go the way I don't want them to go," Mr. Halsen said dolefully.

"And yet, father, things work together for good, don't they? I think it has often happened that the things we have thought were downright misfortunes have turned out real blessings in the end. So perhaps there is a blessing for you and me in this affliction! I can't call it less than an affliction in one sense. But we shall be delighted enough when Melsetter is a Ha' house again, and young Dr. Holtum and his wife are located there. Why, it sounds quite jolly."

"We must bribe Miss Congreve to come and look after *us* when Gerta goes," said the Yarl with a laugh, restored somewhat to his wonted good-nature; but, not wishing to continue the conversation any longer, he got up and said, "I must see after Tammy now, but I shall be back in time for tea. Tell Gerta I *won't* congratulate her just now, but she may kiss me when I come in!"

And away he strode, while Garth gathered himself up, and slowly sauntered indoors, to tell his cousin that the "old man" had taken the startling news much better than either of the young conspirators had expected.

Garth might have reported differently if he had heard the Yarl mutter to himself as he marched off—"Just like my luck! and I had so set my heart on having *her* for my boy!"

He was in very good humour, however, by the time the three met at the tea-table. After that both Gerta and Garth were so engrossed with other matters that they left him to himself, and forgot to ask how the Yarl was occupying his time. Very likely they knew that he had as many home duties to look after as they, and supposed he was so occupied; but they were mistaken.

After a hasty visit to the fishing-station, and a brief glance at some of the fields near the house, Mr. Halsen betook himself to the Crow's-nest, and from its lofty look-out watched the movements of the Buss through his telescope.

The Dutchmen had evidently taken his hint in part, and did not mean to enter Burrawick, but had no intention of leaving its neighbourhood. As the vessel "loafed" about she was spoken by various haaf-boats who had hurried from their fishing-ground as soon as they were aware that Dutchies were on the coast. Of course the men had no money with them, and could neither barter nor buy out there; but the Buss could wait: so the boats hastened home, and Mr. Halsen was shortly afterwards respectfully waited upon by the fishers asking for a "loan" or an "advance" to enable them to return to the foreigners with money.

"Poor rascals, why shouldn't they get their bit of 'stuff' for a reasonable price?" muttered the Yarl to himself, and he continued to argue with himself "all on one side," until any scruples he might have felt while in the society of law-abiding gentlefolks vanished; the old instincts of his blood started into active life, and he was ready to connive at smuggling, perhaps do a little on his own account, without any qualms of conscience!

I do not attempt to justify Mr. Halsen's reasoning or actions; but I venture to say that one must be bred as he had been bred, must live among the same people, and be nursed upon the same views, before he can in the least degree appreciate his position, or understand how he could permit himself to entertain such notions without self-accusation.

I have known men of high Christian principle defend smuggling, as it is, or at least was, carried on in Shetland, as perfectly legitimate action on the part of an ill-used peasantry! Such persons assert that some of *man's* laws are better broken than kept. In this wise argued Mr. Halsen; but ere long he had good reason to wish that he had respected the laws of England rather more.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

RUNNING RISKS.

NEXT morning when Gerta came downstairs she was surprised to find that the *Tangie* was not at her anchorage, and on inquiry she was informed that the Yarl had gone off "for a sail," and had left a message for her that he should return in the afternoon.

"It is like letting the tiger taste blood," she said to Garth when he appeared. "When Uncle Hoskuld has had a whiff of the sea he can't be kept on shore. The only hope of keeping him at home now will be in somebody borrowing the *Tangie* again."

"I am afraid there is not much chance of that at present," Garth replied, "and I don't know that we should wish for it so very much. Dear old man! He is never so happy as when on the sea, and though I can't sympathise in his passion, I can understand its power over him;" and Garth's face clouded over as he spoke, which caused Gerta to ask, "What troubles you, Trow? Don't pretend you're not troubled, for I know better."

"I was thinking partly of how one becomes the slave

of a ruling passion when it is allowed to take its own way."

Gerta smiled. "You speak as if you were sixty instead of sixteen, Trow. I never knew such a boy! I don't believe you ever have been a boy, but just a ready-made Trow all your days. Isn't that the truth?"

He smiled, and she returned to the charge. "But tell me what made you look so grave, Garth? It wasn't altogether because you are afraid that Natural Science is going to make a slave of you. There was more than *your* ruling passion in your mind."

"I was wondering, and a bit uneasy, about this voyage of father's, and wishing he had not gone when the Dutchies are about."

"Certainly Uncle Hoskuld has some queer notions about smuggling, but I don't believe we need bother our heads about it."

"I know what has been done before now," said Garth in a low voice, "and I can't help being troubled."

"Oh well, you can't make it better by worrying," the girl rejoined; "so let us look at the bright side of things: and—we'll give the dear old man a fine scolding when he returns to make up."

Acting on her words Garth dismissed the subject as much as possible from his mind, and set out for a ramble with Fram, while Gerta went away to pay Mam-Breeta a visit, appointing her cousin to meet her at his nurse's cottage on his return. "For, you know, Trow, Mam-Breeta will be expecting you, and will have

a brünie and run-milk ready when you come, so don't be late, please."

We may be sure Gerta was welcomed warmly by Breeta, who had many questions to ask about her "ain bairn," and the "puir leddy o' Lunda," and the Yarl—everybody in fact, for Breeta's sympathies were wide, and a national characteristic (inquisitiveness of a harmless kind) led her to make many trivial inquiries which Gerta was willing enough to answer.

Leaving Gerta to her gossip, and Garth to his communings with nature, we will follow the *Tangie*.

The Yarl had taken no one with him except Tammy and Gloy, and he told them he was going for a sail among the Holmes. I do not assert that he started out that morning with any other intention; but Tammy was not in the least surprised (when they reached those islets, and saw two or three Busses hovering about surrounded by boats) that the *Tangie's* head was turned seaward, and that the Yarl said, "We might as well run out and see what those fellows are about this morning. They seem busy."

"Yea, they're a' that, and why for no'? I canna see for the life o' me, sir, why puir men like wis should no' be allooed to tak what comes wir way. We get sma' favours frae them that's in power ower wis, and why should they hinder wis frae getting gude frae *ithers?*"

The Yarl thought with Tammy, we know, but just then did not think it wise to express his assent; and

merely whistled a tune and steered for the scene of action.

A good bit of business had been transacted under cover of the darkness, and almost all the boats had secured a small contraband cargo before the *Tangie* arrived.

Some consternation occurred when the sloop appeared, for at first she was supposed to be the revenue cutter; but as soon as it became known that she was the "Yarl's yacht" all apprehension vanished, and she was allowed to come as near as she pleased.

I am afraid that I must now admit that Mr. Halsen allowed himself to be persuaded into transacting a trifling bit of business for himself; and a small case of Hollands, with some packages of tobacco, were transferred from the nearest Buss to the *Tangie's* cabin.

Just after this had been done an alarm was raised. A sail was sighted coming from Lerwick! The revenue cutter was on wing! Smithers would be on the scene ere long! Mr. Halsen's spyglass was instantly in use, and he was enabled to confirm the opinion that her Majesty's servants were alert, and coming to spread dismay among the fishermen!

Like a flight of sea-gulls scared from the floating carcass of a "flinsched" whale, the haaf-boats dispersed at once, each taking the shortest cut to their own islands; and as the officers could not give chase to all, the only thing the revenue cutter could do was to

"See, there he goes after a second. It's enough to make me mad!"—*Page* 275.

select one (when she came near enough to guess the state of matters).

The Yarl took the whole affair very coolly. The small amount of stuff he had below could be easily tossed overboard (at no serious loss) if the officers took it into their heads to overhaul the *Tangie*, always supposing she could be caught.

Smithers' sloop was a swift sailer, but the Yarl believed, if it came to a chase, that his own little vessel could show the other her heels easily enough. So the *Tangie* lay at a respectful distance watching the progress of affairs.

Down came the revenue cutter like an osprey on wing, and swooped upon a luckless boat with such rapidity that her crew had not time to throw away their cargo, and were captured with it, to the grief of their neighbours and the disgust of Mr. Halsen.

"She'll pick the poor wretches off one after another as a katyogle might a flock of snae-fowl," he burst forth in a fury. "See, there he goes after a second. It's enough to make me mad!"

He worked himself into a tempest of anger, and forgot the risk he ran himself in his sympathy with the Shetland fishermen. But matters took a new complexion when it was shown that the cutter was giving chase to a boat coming right in the *Tangie's* wake. There was a good distance between the two, but that particular boat was the only one left within

reasonable chance of being made captive, therefore the cutter turned her attention to it.

It was a Burra Isle boat, and was making excellent running, but Mr. Halsen knew that it could never escape of itself, and in a moment he determined to give assistance.

He ran to meet the haaf-boat, and, hailing her, told the skipper to come on the lee-side and tumble the cargo into the *Tangie*.

This was done in so short a time that the Yarl hoped the manœuvre had escaped Smithers' attention; and as soon as the boat, with nothing on board but fishing-lines, &c., was on her course again, he sent his sloop on another tack, expecting that the cutter would continue her pursuit of the boat.

No such thing! The officer in command had a telescope as good, perhaps better, than the Yarl's favourite spyglass, and had detected, or at any rate shrewdly suspected, what was going on at once. Leaving the haaf-boat to reach home at her leisure, Smithers gave chase to the *Tangie*, and his being a much larger craft, soon began to lessen the distance between them.

For some time Mr. Halsen's confidence in his little vessel caused him to laugh contemptuously when he saw the cutter meant to give him chase; but by and by, when it became apparent that he must not hope to escape by speed, he grew grave and thoughtful; and a flush of shame spread over his face as he realised the humiliation in store for him if he—a gentleman by birth,

a landowner, and representative of a well-known family —were ignominiously "taken" breaking the law.

"Sir, it micht be as weel," Tammy suggested, "ta pit a' yon ower the side afore he comes up wi' wis."

For a moment the Yarl hesitated. It would be so easy to drop all the contraband stuff into the sea; then, if Smithers overtook the *Tangie*, he would find nothing in her to warrant an arrest—might even suppose that he had made a mistake, and that the haaf-boat had escaped with her cargo.

It was only for a moment, unfortunately, that the foolish old man entertained the thought of acting discreetly.

"No, Tammy," he said stoutly, "I'll not part with a bit of it. I took it in charge for our own men, whose good money had been paid for it, and I'll neither give it to the sea, nor to Smithers."

"I'm thinking, sir," replied Tammy, scratching his head, "wi' your leave be it said, that Smithers 'ill no ask you to *gie* it; he'll be for *takin'* a' he can find."

"When he takes my sloop, he can take me and the cargo too," the Yarl rejoined. "Now, look here, Tammy. There's a bit of neat sailing you and I can do this afternoon. If we do it as we ought, Smithers will not overhaul us this voyage. It's high tide just now, isn't it?"

"Yea, sir. The sea is going smooth ower the west bau."

"Just so! and we've got to take the *Tangie* over the

west bau, and jink the cutter round Swarta Stack and the South Ness. Do you understand?"

"Yea, fine that!" replied Tammy with a broad grin, as the Yarl's project revealed itself.

That you may understand the piece of daring navigation which Mr. Halsen meant to try, I will endeavour to explain the situation so that you may see what danger attended the course which it was purposed the *Tangie* should take, and what safety from further pursuit she would secure if she went over the west bau scatheless.

Swarta Stack is a high island about half a mile in length, lying within a very short distance from Burra Isle. The channel between the two is studded with skerries and "baus," some of the latter uncovered at low water, some of them sunk enough to allow a vessel of light draught to pass over at high tide. One of these (the west bau) lies in the middle of a very narrow channel, and no man who was not well acquainted with the place, and with the craft he commanded, would dream of navigating that sound. If the *Tangie* performed this feat, she would win an immense advantage over the cutter who would be obliged to circumnavigate Swarta Stack before she got on the track of her "game" again; and by the time she had done that, the *Tangie* would be out of sight around the South Ness hiding in one of the numerous land-locked fiords on the west side of Burra Isle. The danger—and a mighty one it was—would be if the current was running

strong enough to draw the sloop too near the "tap o' the bau," where she might strike; or the wind might carry her into shallow water upon the coast. If she "touched" on either side she "was done for."

The Yarl knew all that right well; but he believed (as we have already often seen) in himself and his yacht; and he said no more, but set the *Tangie* for the "Narrows" without the least hesitation, while Tammy and Gloy stood by the sails to render any assistance which might be required.

"He'll surely never think o' comin' this gait aifter wis?" quoth Tammy, glancing back at the cutter when they were fairly among the skerries making for that terrible sound. "He'll never be sich a fule as that surely."

"If he does he'll come to grief as sure as eggs are eggs," said Mr. Halsen with a reckless laugh. "But that is none of our business; and—he has a boat—if he chooses to mash up the *Teaser* on a rock."

But Captain Smithers was no fool, and he was not going to pop his cutter into a booby-trap. He knew the locality by chart and by reputation, and was satisfied that he could not follow the *Tangie* through the Narrows; but he meant to keep his eye on her, and hoped he could capture her eventually; so as soon as she was fairly in the channel the *Teaser* took the course round Swarta Stack, not without a hope in her commander's breast that the Yarl's yacht might fall into her own trap and come to the end of her voyage on the west bau.

"He's awa' roond the Stack!" cried Tammy exultantly.

"Blessin' follow him," added Gloy.

The Yarl did not even smile, for they were nearing the west bau, and a few minutes would decide the matter.

As luck would have it, everything worked well, and the *Tangie* passed the peril in complete safety; but when it was over, and the *Teaser's* tapering mast disappeared behind Swarta Stack, a new idea occurred to the old sea-king.

"We'll go about," he said suddenly, "and do it again."

"What for, sir?" Tammy exclaimed in bewildered consternation, thinking his master had gone mad.

"What for?" the Yarl echoed. "*This* for. They expect the *Tangie* to Burrawick by this time, and she can't possibly be there before to-morrow if she goes further to the suth'ard. She can anchor by Broch in a couple of hours if we go back as we came. With this fine side wind we can easily be around the North Ness before Smithers has done more than round Swarta Stack. He will suppose we have run for Üya-sound or Scarpavoe, and will go there in search of us, and we shall be lying snug at home on the other side of the isle!"

While speaking Mr. Halsen had acted on his new idea, and in a short time the *Tangie* was once more threading those dangerous Narrows. Again it was safely done, and the little sloop was well round the North Ness when the *Teaser* came in sight of the sound once more.

"They've been smart in getting through and away," Captain Smithers said, "but we shall find them in one of those fiords close by." He was disappointed, however, and very perplexed. Indeed he almost believed that the *Tangie* must have been wrecked and gone down in the Narrows; or proved herself a veritable sea-devil, and vanished from his ken!

While he was searching for her around the west and south coasts, and finding no better name for her than her own, the *Tangie* was lying snug at the usual anchorage under shadow of Broch, and the Yarl was secretly vowing that as soon as he had restored to the fishermen the things he had taken in charge he would wash his hands for ever more of all smuggling.

CHAPTER XXIX.

POOR LITTLE "TANGIE."

NEVER in all his life had Mr. Halsen waited so impatiently for night as on that autumn evening when he sat alone in his Crow's-nest thinking over his smuggling adventure, and feeling in all its shame the risk he had run of degradation and disgrace. He had not said one word of all that had happened that day to his son or niece. He could scarcely bear to feel their eyes upon him, and had made an excuse to bid them good-night early.

He had arranged with the men whose "bargains" he had in charge, that they should accompany him to the sloop to receive their property about midnight. The light lingers so long in these regions, at that season, that it would not be possible to remove the smuggled goods in secrecy before that hour. Thus the Yarl had some time to spend in solitary reflection after Gerta and Garth had retired to rest, before the moment when he should be "wanted" on board his yacht, and it was a "bad season" for him.

He was not afraid of being caught by the custom-

house officers then, for on his arrival at home he had sent a runner across the island to spy on Smithers; and the messenger reported the revenue cutter (after an unsuccessful search) as having sailed for Lerwick again. No! it was not fear, but regret, which troubled him, and a hundred times he vowed there that never never again would he lend himself to such underhand and unlawful transactions.

About eleven o'clock he went to the window and impatiently drew back the curtain, muttering as he did it.

"The minutes seem to crawl to-night, and the sun seems to be taking longer than usual about going to bed. Bother the whole business! I'm sick of—— Gracious! what is that?"

He had flung the curtain aside, and there before him on the quiet water of the fiord, making light the dim landscape around, a fierce fire was burning.

The Yarl stood and stared, and for a moment could scarcely credit his own eyes; but in a few seconds later the strange flickering glare suddenly burst into a torrent of flame and sent forth a shower of brilliant hissing rockets which flew into the air, and then fell sputtering and quenched upon the sea. He knew what it was then. That fiery shower had shown him all. The *Tangie* was on fire, and must be utterly consumed before many minutes! The poor old man gave one groan, as the truth was made apparent, and sank back in the window-seat.

There, without word or motion, he sat and watched his sloop burn to the water's edge. He knew it was hopeless to attempt to save her, he knew that the hand of justice was in the tragic end of the "Yarl's yacht," and he knew also that he himself had lit that pyre.

He had been the last to leave the sloop, and he remembered lighting his pipe before going into the boat; he remembered striking more than one match for that purpose, and dropping them carelessly on the floor of his cabin. No doubt a spark had taken effect; and there being much inflammable stuff on board—specially the smuggled spirits—a very short time served to set the yacht in a fierce blaze.

He could hear men talking loudly on the beach, but he never attempted to leave his place. By and by some one came running to Broch, and seeing a light in his room and a shadow on the wall came below the window and called up to him, "If ye plase, sir, the sloop is on fire."

He leaned out and answered quietly, "I know it, but there is nothing we can do," and the man went off again.

The conflagration did not last long, and very soon there was nothing of the bonnie "Yarl's yacht" left but a charred and smoking hulk, which sank under the water soon after the flames died down.

Mr. Halsen at his open window heard the hiss and gurgle which accompanied the sinking of the hull, and

when all was silent and dark once more, he dropped his head on his hands, and wept a few heavy tears.

We may imagine the surprise and sorrow of his son and niece next morning when they heard what had happened to the *Tangie*.

He told them the whole story himself—all about the smuggled cargo, the chase, the escape through the Narrows—and he wound up by saying, "I richly deserved this; I mean I deserved to suffer; but the sloop, poor thing! it wasn't her fault, and I could wish she had not shared her owner's punishment."

"It is a heavy loss to you, father," said Garth, "even from a pecuniary point of view. Was the *Tangie* insured?"

"Oh no. I never thought she'd come to any harm. I shall lose more than her value even."

The young people looked inquiringly, but said nothing, and he went on. "I must, of course, give the poor fishermen full value for what they put on board my poor little *Tangie*."

Then he shook himself, as if casting from him by a mighty effort some heavy incubus, and added, "I believe I am almost thankful that my punishment has come at once, and has been no worse. After all, it might have been worse."

"O Uncle Hoskuld! *could* anything be harder for you to bear than the loss of the *Tangie?*" Gerta exclaimed.

"Yes, my dear," the old gentleman answered quietly,

"I felt *how* terrible a thing might come as a punishment when this boy lay at the point of death," and he put his arm around Garth with a caress more tender than any he had ever bestowed on his son before.

"We can build another *Tangie*," Garth said. "Father, when I am famous and rich, you shall have the loveliest sloop in creation, and we'll call her the *Tangie*."

"No, no! Garth. No more sea-devils for me. She was my snare and delusion, poor little *Tangie!*"

"She was something very much the reverse to a great many people, uncle; and we are not going to joke about her now she is no more."

"Was I joking? I did not feel like joking. But the truth is, I don't quite know how I feel to-day about a good many things. I've had a blow, and a sort of—awakening." And he passed his hand in a bewildered manner across his brow.

They cheered and comforted him to the best of their ability, and they would have kept the secret of his humiliation faithfully; but the Yarl was determined to do penance in the face of day. He went among the fishermen, when he had paid to those who had lost by the *Tangie* the value of their property, and told of his adventure and its consequences, at the same time declaring that he felt he had not been justified in evading the lawful dues. "Mind, I don't say that it is altogether fair that a place like this should be under such restraints, but I must declare that we sin in attempting to go against the laws of the land. We

can't have everything perfect; and, take it all in all, we receive perhaps compensation for some of our wrongs in liberties which another nation than Britain might not give us."

I do not suppose his *words* would have had much weight, coming as they did in direct opposition to his former opinions and practice, but the Shetlanders are superstitious, and the Burra Isle folk really believed that the loss of the sloop was "a judgment" for smuggling. They abstained henceforth from "illicit traffic" of the sort, lest a like sorrow might fall upon them; and Mr. Halsen was pleased to believe that he had weaned his people from a dangerous practice.

Ill news travels fast, and a couple of days after the *Tangie's* tragic end news of it reached Lunda. Our lads could not credit the intelligence, and hurried to Broch for confirmation of it, which of course they got.

"Then is there nothing, absolutely nothing, of the yacht left?" Bill Mitchell exclaimed. "It seems impossible to believe."

"If you like to go to her anchorage and look down —the water is clear enough now—you'll see her keel with a few planks attached to it, and some skeleton ribs. That's all of her that's to the fore," replied the Yarl.

"Her remains should have decent burial," quoth Tom. "I wouldn't leave them *there* anyhow."

Acting upon his hint the lads set to work and

brought the "remains" on shore; and then Garth had an inspiration.

Amy and he had erected a small grotto at one end of the fell-dyke, and Gerta had always declared that there should be something of the same sort at the other end, which was Garth's own particular corner of the garden.

As soon as Garth explained his project, they all set to work with a will, and with the Yarl's delighted assent. Before long a picturesque "boat-house" was standing below the windows of Broch, roofed in with the *Tangie's* remains, and leaning against Gerta's favourite fell-dyke; and even Mr. Halsen allowed that the yacht's keel served no ignominious purpose in being so turned upside down on *terra firma.*

When Miss Congreve and her father returned from Lunda, Amy planted creepers about this unique summer-house, and in time these wound themselves gracefully around it, clasping the *Tangie's* hull in the embrace of beauty, yearly renewed when the sun comes back to Norland waking green life in sleeping Nature.

And there, under shadow of the old keel that had so often ploughed the waters beneath their light young feet, year by year Gerta Bruce and Svein Holtum dreamed the dreams of love and youth, renewing their early vows, until a day came when the old home of her father's in a neighbouring island was restored and made ready to receive the "little lady of Collaster," and Dr. Svein Holtum, junior, took her away from Broch, which would

have been dark indeed without its young housekeeper if a fit substitute had not been found.

One lovely summer's afternoon—the day, in fact, of Gerta's marriage—Amy Congreve was sitting alone in the "boat-house" watching a yacht sail out the Wick. This was Fred Garson's *Aphrodite*, which he had lent to his friend Svein, and which was bearing the young couple to Melsetter.

Amy wore her bridesmaid's garments of white, with flowers in her hair and belt; but there was a look of sadness on her face which seemed to tell of recent sorrow not altogether banished by the wedding mirth.

Fram, considerably aged, but acute and companionable as ever, sat at her feet with his nose against her knee, and Amy, laying her hand on his head, said softly, "Ah, Fram, times are changed since you and I first met!"

Then she looked up at the stained, charred ribs which arched over the summer-house, and sighed. "How happy we all were when the dear little *Tangie* sailed the seas!"

A shadow fell on the grass in front of the summer-house, and Garth Halsen stood before her.

He was changed from the boy we first knew, and yet *not* changed. Tall and slight he was a strikingly handsome young man, with the same fair curls, and poet's *tout ensemble*, which had distinguished him as a lad.

He held a book in his hand,—not, as had been his wont of old, with one finger between the leaves marking his "place." The book was quite new and closed, and as he took a seat by Amy he laid the volume on her knee, whereupon Fram sniffed around it as suspiciously as he had done around the Treasure-trove.

"Don't look at it, Amy, just yet," Garth said, "but I'll tell you what it is. I've kept it as 'a surprise' for to-day! It is my last work—not a scientific book this time, but a volume of Shetland poems. You have seen a number of them in manuscript—nay, don't open it till I've said my say," and he laid his hand on hers which was upon the book.

"Amy," he went on in low tender tones, "if I tell you that your dear father knew what my heart-desire was and warmly approved, giving me the blessing of a son when he died in my arms in that far far land; if I tell you that I have loved you with all my soul, through all those years of wandering in pursuit of Science and Fame, and that I have won a name and position only that I might offer them to you; if I tell you that my father loves you like a daughter and will bless the day I bring you to his arms as such: will you —may I hope. Ah, my darling—I know you will—though we have not spoken out we have understood each other—have we not?"

She was folded to his heart then, and lifting her face to his, said softly, "Yes, we love one another."

I am afraid these young persons did not take much

note of time that afternoon, for hour followed on hour and still they sat together in the summer-house with Fram at their feet, the book of poems in their hands, and the spirit of the *Tangie* casting gentle shadows around them as its filmy wings spread from the roof to the green turf like the silver mist of romance haloing the dream of youth.

Presently the Yarl came slowly up from the shore, and, catching the gleam of Amy's white frock, turned towards the summer-house. They scarcely changed their position when they saw him, and when he stood on the threshold his genial countenance was alight with satisfied pleasure.

"It's all settled, I suppose, children," he said, trying to make a joke and speak lightly; but the expression of his son's face moved the deeper fountains of feeling to overflowing, and tears sprang to the old man's eyes.

"Come, my daughter, come and welcome!" he said, holding out his hands to Amy who went at once to his embrace.

Then he sat down between them, and tried to talk of trivial things until he was recovered, when Amy showed him Garth's book.

"There is a copy for you on your table in the Crow's-nest, father," said Garth. "You will pardon me for *personally* giving Amy the first; but the one I had in *my own hands* first is yours. People who can judge tell me that I shall be better known by my verses than by my scientific discoveries."

"Look at the dedication," said Amy. "I feel so proud of my poet. Then the Yarl read—

"To Amy,
who has made my native
land her own."

"That is very pretty," said Mr. Halsen, and he turned over the leaves at random, reading aloud some of the titles of poems (or a few lines) here and there till he came to the last, and that was too much for him, for it was called "The Yarl's Yacht." Again the tears welled up in his eyes, and he faltered, "Poor little *Tangie*. Oh, well, children, we mustn't look *down*, but *up* now."

THE END.

Printed by Ballantyne, Hanson & Co.
Edinburgh & London

By the Rev. J. JACKSON WRAY.

BETWIXT TWO FIRES. Extra crown 8vo. 2s.

OLD CRUSTY'S NIECE. Crown 8vo. 1s. 6d.

WILL IT LIFT? A Story of a London Fog. With Illustrations. Crown 8vo. 1s. 6d.

JACK HORNER THE SECOND. With Illustrations. Crown 8vo. 1s.

SIMON HOLMES, THE CARPENTER OF ASPENDALE. With Illustrations. Extra crown 8vo. 2s.

THE SECRET OF THE MERE; or, Under the Surface. Crown 8vo. 1s. 6d.

GARTON ROWLEY; or, Leaves from the Log of a Master Mariner. With Illustrations. Crown 8vo. 1s. 6d.

HONEST JOHN STALLIBRASS. With Illustrations. Crown 8vo. 1s. 6d.

MATTHEW MELLOWDEW. Illustrated. Demy 8vo. 5s. Extra crown 8vo. 2s.

NESTLETON MAGNA. Demy 8vo. 5s. Extra crown 8vo. 2s.

PETER PENGELLY. With Illustrations. Crown 8vo. 1s.

PAUL MEGGITT'S DELUSION. With Illustrations. Crown 8vo. 1s. 6d.

A MAN EVERY INCH OF HIM. Crown 8vo. 1s. 6d.

"A SONG O' SIXPENCE" FOR THE BAIRNS. Small crown 8vo. 1s.

GEOFFREY HALLAM; or, The Clerk of the Parish. Small crown 8vo. 1s.

THE MAN WITH THE KNAPSACK; or, The Miller of Burnham Lee. Small crown 8vo. 9d.

WIDOW WINPENNY'S WATCHWORD. Small crown 8vo. 9d.

THE PRIZE SERIES.

Demy 8vo, gilt edges. 5s. each.

1. THE DAYS OF BRUCE. By GRACE AGUILAR.
2. BARRIERS BURNED AWAY. By E. P. ROE.
3. BEN-HUR. By LEW WALLACE.
4. HOME INFLUENCE. By GRACE AGUILAR.
5. OPENING OF A CHESTNUT BURR. By E. P. ROE.
6. FROM PLOUGHSHARE TO PULPIT. By GORDON STABLES.
8. THE LAMPLIGHTER. By MARIA S. CUMMINS.
9. STEADY YOUR HELM. By W. C. METCALFE.
10. THE MOTHER'S RECOMPENSE. By GRACE AGUILAR.
12. WESTWARD HO! By CHARLES KINGSLEY.
13. NOR'ARD OF THE DOGGER. By E. J. MATHER.
14. NESTLETON MAGNA. By J. JACKSON WRAY.
15. JOHN HALIFAX, GENTLEMAN. By Mrs. CRAIK.
16. MATTHEW MELLOWDEW. By J. JACKSON WRAY.
17. A FIGHT FOR FREEDOM. By GORDON STABLES.
18. THE RIP'S REDEMPTION. By E. LIVINGSTON PRESCOTT.
19. OLD MORTALITY. By Sir WALTER SCOTT.
21. THE PEARL DIVERS. By GORDON STABLES.
23. ST. ELMO. By A. J. E. WILSON.
24. THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS.
25. IT IS NEVER TOO LATE TO MEND. By CHAS. READE.
27. FACE TO FACE WITH NAPOLEON. By O. V. CAINE.
28. IN THE YEAR OF WATERLOO. By O. V. CAINE.
29. INFELICE. By A. J. E. WILSON.
30. A TALE OF TWO CITIES. By CHARLES DICKENS.
31. THE LIFEBOAT. By R. M. BALLANTYNE.
32. THE LIGHTHOUSE. By R. M. BALLANTYNE.
33. SHIFTING WINDS. By R. M. BALLANTYNE.

34. THE MILL ON THE FLOSS. By GEORGE ELIOT.
35. ONE OF THE RED SHIRTS. By H. HAYENS.
36. LITTLE WOMEN AND GOOD WIVES.
37. GENERAL GORDON. By Lieut.-Col. CHURCHILL.
38. DANESBURY HOUSE. By Mrs. HENRY WOOD.
39. TOM BROWN'S SCHOOLDAYS.
40. BETWIXT TWO FIRES. By J. JACKSON WRAY.
41. THE WOMAN IN WHITE. By WILKIE COLLINS.
42. WITH CUTLASS AND TORCH. By GORDON STABLES.
43. WANDERER AND KING. By O. V. CAINE.
44. FOXE'S BOOK OF MARTYRS.
45. SILVER CHIMES. By EMMA MARSHALL.
46. THE CLOISTER AND THE HEARTH. By CHAS. READE.
47. ROMOLA. By GEORGE ELIOT.
48. THE STORY OF WESTMINSTER ABBEY.
49. SONS OF VICTORY. By O. V. CAINE.
50. OLIVER TWIST. By CHAS. DICKENS.
51. GRIMM'S FAIRY TALES.
52. PALESTINE EXPLORED. By JAMES NEIL, M.A.
53. HANS ANDERSEN'S FAIRY TALES.

By O. V. CAINE.

SONS OF VICTORY. A Boy's Story of the Coming of Napoleon. Large crown 8vo. 2s. 6d. and 2s.

WANDERER AND KING. A Story of the Time of Charles II. Demy 8vo. 5s. Large crown 8vo. 2s. 6d.

FACE TO FACE WITH NAPOLEON. Demy 8vo. 5s. Large crown 8vo. 2s. 6d.

IN THE YEAR OF WATERLOO. Demy 8vo. 5s. Large crown 8vo. 2s. 6d.

THE BOYS' HOLIDAY LIBRARY.

A New Series of Stories of Adventure for Boys, including copyright works by R. M. Ballantyne, O. V. Caine, Gordon Stables, and other well-known writers. Bound in attractive style, with coloured illustrations. Large crown 8vo. 2s. 6d. each.

1. THE BIG OTTER. By R. M. BALLANTYNE.
2. FACE TO FACE WITH NAPOLEON. By O. V. CAINE.
3. IVANHOE. By Sir WALTER SCOTT.
4. A FIGHT FOR FREEDOM. By GORDON STABLES.
5. THE LAST OF THE MOHICANS. By J. FENIMORE COOPER.
6. THE KING'S RECRUITS.
7. WESTWARD HO! By CHARLES KINGSLEY.
8. STEADY YOUR HELM. By W. C. METCALFE.
9. BARON AND SQUIRE. A STORY OF THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR.
10. ON THE WORLD'S ROOF. By J. MACDONALD OXLEY.
11. THE THREE MUSKETEERS. By ALEXANDRE DUMAS.
12. OFF TO KLONDYKE. By GORDON STABLES.
13. TWENTY THOUSAND LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA. By JULES VERNE.
14. IN THE SWING OF THE SEA. By J. M. OXLEY.
15. REMEMBER THE "MAINE." By GORDON STABLES.
16. ABOVE BOARD. By W. C. METCALFE.
17. THE ADVENTURES OF MR. VERDANT GREEN.
18. THE DUKE'S PAGE.
19. IN THE YEAR OF WATERLOO. By O. V. CAINE.
20. THE YOUNG FUR-TRADERS. By R. M. BALLANTYNE.
21. UNGAVA. By R. M. BALLANTYNE.
22. FROM PLOUGHSHARE TO PULPIT. By GORDON STABLES.
23. THE CORAL ISLAND. By R. M. BALLANTYNE.
24. ON WAR'S RED TIDE. By GORDON STABLES.
25. CHARLES O'MALLEY. By CHARLES LEVER.
26. THE PEARL DIVERS. By GORDON STABLES.
27. THE LAST OF THE BARONS. By Lord LYTTON.
28. WITH CUTLASS AND TORCH. By GORDON STABLES.
29. TOM BROWN'S SCHOOLDAYS.
30. ONE OF THE RED SHIRTS. By H. HAYENS.
31. IN FOREST LANDS. By GORDON STABLES.
32. SOME BOYS' DOINGS. By JOHN HABBERTON.
33. AN ISLAND AFLOAT. By GORDON STABLES.
34. WANDERER AND KING. By O. V. CAINE.
35. THE RIGHT O' THE LINE. By R. J. POWER BERREY.
36. THE CLOISTER AND THE HEARTH. By CHARLES READE.
37. THE METEOR FLAG OF ENGLAND. By GORDON STABLES.
38. SONS OF VICTORY. By O. V. CAINE.
39. A SON OF THE SEA. By F. T. BULLEN.

By Mrs. Marshall

"Readers who value culture and refinement, but, above all, seek for truth and unction, will recommend her tales, especially for young ladies." —*Churchman.*

Large crown 8vo. 2s. 6d. each.

UNDER THE LABURNUMS.

ONLY SUSAN.

THE LADY'S MANOR.

LIZETTE. A Story for Girls.

THE CLOSE OF ST. CHRISTOPHER'S.

NEW RELATIONS. A Story for Girls.

THOSE THREE; or, Little Wings.

LAUREL CROWNS; or, Griselda's Aim.

HOUSES ON WHEELS. A Story for Children.

LADY ROSALIND; or, Family Feuds.

IN THE PURPLE.

DAPHNE'S DECISION; or, Which Shall it Be?

EASTWARD HO!

CASSANDRA'S CASKET.

SILVER CHIMES; or, Olive.

STORIES OF THE CATHEDRAL CITIES OF ENGLAND.

POPPIES AND PANSIES.

DEWDROPS AND DIAMONDS.

HEATHER AND HAREBELL.

PICTURES ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE LORD'S PRAYER. With Appropriate Stories for Children. Medium 4to. 2s. 6d.

Mrs. Marshall's Works—continued

With Illustrations. Large crown 8vo.
2s. each.

SILVER CHIMES.
LAUREL CROWNS.
EASTWARD HO!

With Illustrations. Crown 8vo.
1s. 6d. each.

HEATHER AND HAREBELL.
THE ROSES OF RINGWOOD. A Story for Children.
REX AND REGINA; or, The Song of the River.
DULCIBEL'S DAY-DREAMS; or, The Grand Sweet Song.
THE PINK OF PERFECTION.
ONLY SUSAN.
TIME TRIES.
SIR VALENTINE'S VICTORY, and other Stories.
OLIVER'S OLD PICTURES; or, The Magic Circle.
MISTRESS MATCHETT'S MISTAKE.

With Illustrations. Small crown 8vo.
1s. each.

SIR BENJAMIN'S BOUNTY.
MASTER MARTIN.
LETTICE LAWSON'S LEGACY.
THE BRIDE'S HOME.

Mrs. Marshall's Works—continued

With Illustrations. Small crown 8vo.
1s. each.

PAT'S INHERITANCE.

MY LADY BOUNTIFUL.

MICHAEL'S TREASURES; or, Choice Silver.

MY GRANDMOTHER'S PICTURES.

THREE LITTLE BROTHERS.

WHEN I WAS YOUNG.

GOLDEN SILENCE.

Small crown 8vo. 9d. each.

PRIMROSE.

A CHIP OF THE OLD BLOCK.

FRAMILODE HALL.

A ROSE WITHOUT THORNS.

DAISY BRIGHT.

LIGHT ON THE LILY.

VIOLET IN THE SHADE.

By Agnes Giberne

"Tales that bear Miss Giberne's name are 'the best of the best.' No writer excels her in this department of literature."—*Fireside News.*

"That the story is Miss Giberne's guarantees refinement and Christian principle."—*Churchman.*

With Illustrations. Extra crown 8vo.
2s. 6d. each.

MISS CON; or, All Those Girls. 2s. 6d. and 2s.

"Constance Conway is a charming heroine. Her diary is an admirable collection of character sketches."—*Athenæum.*

ENID'S SILVER BOND. 2s. 6d.

"Enid's nature is essentially heroic. . . . The other characters are cleverly sketched."—*Times.*

ST. AUSTIN'S LODGE; or, Mr. Berkeley and his Nieces. 2s. 6d.

"A very good example of the author's well-known style. It is carefully written, and is in all respects a conscientious performance."—*Academy.*

BERYL AND PEARL. Illustrated. 2s. 6d.

"One of Miss Giberne's most delightful tales."—*Record.*

KATHLEEN. Illustrated. 2s. 6d. and 2s.

"A fascinating tale."—*Record.*

AIMÉE: A Tale of the Days of James the Second. Illustrated. 2s. 6d.

DECIMA'S PROMISE. 2s. 6d. and 2s.

"One of the best and soundest books we have seen."—*Public Opinion.*

By Agnes Giberne—continued

SWEETBRIAR. Illustrated. Crown 8vo. 1s. 6d.

THE DALRYMPLES. With Illustrations. Crown 8vo. 1s. 6d.

"An interesting tale, exhibiting some striking situations."—*Church Bells.*

"LEAST SAID, SOONEST MENDED." Crown 8vo. 1s. 6d.

"To say that it is by Miss Giberne is at once to recommend the story highly to girls."—*Quiver.*

NUMBER THREE WINIFRED PLACE. Crown 8vo. 1s. 6d.

"A delightful story, and, we need hardly add—being Miss Giberne's—is full of the highest and most profitable religious teaching."—*Record.*

"Miss Giberne's book is for gentler readers. It appeals very delicately to their softer sympathies, and introduces them to one young girl at least who may serve as a model or ideal to them. It is written in a pleasing sympathetic style."—*Scotsman.*

READY, AYE READY! 1s. 6d.

"A charming story, which displays all this well-known writer's knowledge of girls and their habits of mind."—*Scotsman.*

OLD UMBRELLAS; or, Clarrie and her Mother. 1s.

"The book is bright and lively, and will be read with pleasure and profit."—*Christian.*

By L. T. Meade

"Displays vivid conception of character, and clear, graphic description. The story is full of incident and adventure."—*Literary Churchman.*

THE RED CAP OF LIBERTY. Extra crown 8vo. 2s. 6d. and 2s.

IN THE FLOWER OF HER YOUTH. Extra crown 8vo. 2s. 6d.

CASTLE POVERTY. Extra crown 8vo. 2s.

THE WITCH MAID. Extra crown 8vo. 2s. 6d.; and plain, 2s.

THE CLEVEREST WOMAN IN ENGLAND. Extra crown 8vo. 2s. 6d. and 2s.

WHEELS OF IRON. Extra crown 8vo. 2s.

WAGES. A Novel. Extra crown 8vo. 2s.

GOOD LUCK. With Illustrations by W. LANCE. Crown 8vo. 1s. 6d.

THE CHILDREN'S PILGRIMAGE. With Illustrations. Crown 8vo. 1s. 6d.

By E. Livingston Prescott

THE MEASURE OF A MAN. Extra crown 8vo. 2s. 6d.

"A good romance, full of illusion, and with fine effect."—*Daily Chronicle.*

"A notable success."—*Scotsman.*

A SOLDIER'S STORY; or, The Rip's Redemption. With Frontispiece. Extra crown 8vo. Demy 8vo, gilt edges. 5s.

"Heartily welcome . . . always interesting . . . will well repay perusal."—*Scotsman.*

"Well written . . . brightly coloured . . . peculiarly attractive."—*Dundee Advertiser.*

By Mrs. Saxby

VIKING BOYS. With Illustrations. Crown 8vo. 1s. 6d.

"Wholesome and manly in tone, the book is thoroughly fresh and natural."—*Morning Post.*

"We prophesy that the tale of the Viking boys and their wild deeds will become as popular as 'The Lads of Lunda,' and all the other stories with which Mrs. Saxby has delighted us."—*Athenæum.*

THE LADS OF LUNDA. Illustrated. Crown 8vo. 1s. 6d.

"A perfect book for boys—generous, wholesome, manly in tone, and withal thoroughly young, fresh, and natural. We recommend the book heartily, not only to all boys, but to everybody who knows and likes brave boys."—*Guardian.*

"A capital book. The tales are full of fun and pathos."—*Athenæum.*

THE YARL'S YACHT. With Illustrations. Crown 8vo. 1s. 6d.

"'The Yarl's Yacht' is a delightful sequel to the 'Lads of Lunda.'"—*Times.*

THE HOME OF A NATURALIST. By Jessie M. E. Saxby and the Rev. Biot Edmonston. With Illustrations. Crown 8vo. 3s. 6d.

"We would fain linger long over the scenes which this excellent volume brings up before us. The authors have put together a very refreshing set of memories."—*Saturday Review.*

By S. M. S. Clarke

(*Mrs. Pereira*)

THE KING'S RECRUITS; or, In the Days of Frederick the Great. Illustrated. Extra crown 8vo. 2s. 6d.

BARON AND SQUIRE. A Story of the Thirty Years' War. With Illustrations. Extra crown 8vo. 2s. 6d.

"It is a romance of the school of Sir Walter Scott, abounding in stirring incidents, and not without a certain value as vividly calling up the scenes and events of real history."—*Scotsman.*

THE DUKE'S PAGE; or, "In the Days of Luther." A Story for Boys. Illustrated. Extra crown 8vo. 2s. 6d. and 2s.

"A capital story for boys."—*Guardian.*

"This is one of the most fascinating historical tales we have ever read."—*British Weekly.*

By Susan Warner

Large crown 8vo, 2s.; with gilt edges, 2s. 6d.

THE WIDE WIDE WORLD.

MY DESIRE.

NOBODY.

THE END OF A COIL.

DIANA.

STEPHEN, M.D.

MELBOURNE HOUSE.

DAISY IN THE FIELD.

QUEECHY.

WYCH HAZEL. By SUSAN and ANNA WARNER.

THE GOLD OF CHICKAREE. A Sequel to "Wych Hazel."

THE OLD HELMET.

A LETTER OF CREDIT.

THE GOLDEN LADDER. By SUSAN and ANNA WARNER.

A RED WALLFLOWER.

DAISY PLAINS.

The Presentation Series

Of copyright stories, carefully selected from the works of well-known authors; each volume is clearly printed on good paper, and contains in most cases coloured pictures, and in a few cases where the pictures are not coloured a very large number of black and white illustrations. The cover is strikingly effective, with its Full Leather back and sides, with Gilt edges and Handsome Gilt Design. Large crown 8vo. 5s.

1. FIGHTING THE FLAMES. By R. M. BALLANTYNE.
2. THE LIFEBOAT. By R. M. BALLANTYNE.
3. ONE OF THE RED SHIRTS. By H. HAYENS.
4. FACE TO FACE WITH NAPOLEON. By O. V. CAINE.
5. IN THE YEAR OF WATERLOO. By O. V. CAINE.
6. WANDERER AND KING. By O. V. CAINE.
7. SONS OF VICTORY. By O. V. CAINE.
8. FROISSART IN BRITAIN. By HENRY NEWBOLT.
9. THE STORY OF WESTMINSTER ABBEY. By V. BROOKE-HUNT.
10. A FIGHT FOR FREEDOM. By GORDON STABLES.
11. ON WAR'S RED TIDE. By GORDON STABLES.
12. GRIMM'S FAIRY TALES. Copyright Translation by N. J. DAVIDSON, B.A.
13. THE METEOR FLAG OF ENGLAND. By GORDON STABLES.
14. MY LADY JOANNA. By Miss EVERETT-GREEN.
15. THE LIFE OF LORD ROBERTS. By V. BROOKE-HUNT.
16. A SON OF THE SEA. By F. T. BULLEN.
17. HANS ANDERSEN'S FAIRY TALES.
18. HEREWARD THE WAKE. By CHARLES KINGSLEY.
19. FRANK BROWN. By F. T. BULLEN.
20. SILVER CHIMES. By Mrs. MARSHALL.
21. UNCLE TOM'S CABIN. By H. B. STOWE.

The Girls' Holiday Library

Selected Stories for Girls, including copyright works by Mrs. MOLESWORTH, L. T. MEADE, &c. Bound in attractive style, cloth extra, fully illustrated. Large crown 8vo. 2s. 6d. each.

1. THE CLOSE OF ST. CHRISTOPHER'S. By Mrs. MARSHALL.
2. NEW RELATIONS. A Story for Girls. By Mrs. MARSHALL.
3. THOSE THREE. A Story for Girls. By Mrs. MARSHALL.
4. LAUREL CROWNS. By Mrs. MARSHALL.
5. HOUSES ON WHEELS. By Mrs. MARSHALL.
6. THE LADY'S MANOR. By Mrs. MARSHALL.
7. ONLY SUSAN. By Mrs. MARSHALL.
8. UNDER THE LABURNUMS. By Mrs. MARSHALL.
9. THE GRIM HOUSE. By Mrs. MOLESWORTH.
10. THE CLEVEREST WOMAN IN ENGLAND. By L. T. MEADE.
11. LIZETTE. A Story for Girls. By Mrs. MARSHALL.
12. KATHERINE'S KEYS. By SARAH DOUDNEY.
13. LADY ROSALIND. By Mrs. MARSHALL.
14. DECIMA'S PROMISE. By AGNES GIBERNE.
15. THE STORY OF THE LIFE OF QUEEN VICTORIA. By W. W. TULLOCH.
16. SILVER CHIMES. A Story for Children. By Mrs. MARSHALL.
17. DAPHNE'S DECISION; or, Which Shall it Be? By Mrs. MARSHALL.
18. CASSANDRA'S CASKET. By Mrs. MARSHALL.
19. POPPIES AND PANSIES. By Mrs. MARSHALL.
20. DEWDROPS AND DIAMONDS. By Mrs. MARSHALL.
21. HEATHER AND HAREBELL. By Mrs. MARSHALL.
22. IN THE PURPLE. By Mrs. MARSHALL.
23. EASTWARD HO! By Mrs. MARSHALL.
24. MISS CON; or, All Those Girls. By AGNES GIBERNE.
25. KATHLEEN. By AGNES GIBERNE.

The Girls' Holiday Library—continued

26. ENID'S SILVER BOND. By AGNES GIBERNE.
27. BERYL AND PEARL. By AGNES GIBERNE.
28. ST. AUSTIN'S LODGE. By AGNES GIBERNE.
29. AIMÉE. By AGNES GIBERNE.
30. LITTLE WOMEN AND GOOD WIVES. By L. M. ALCOTT.
31. THE MILL ON THE FLOSS. By GEORGE ELIOT.
32. THE MEASURE OF A MAN. By E. LIVINGSTON PRESCOTT.
33. UNSTORIED IN HISTORY. By GABRIELLE FESTING.
34. THE KEY TO THE RIDDLE. By MARGARET COMRIE.
35. A TALE OF TWO CITIES. By CHAS. DICKENS.
36. A SOLDIER'S STORY. By E. LIVINGSTON PRESCOTT.
37. MY LADY JOANNA. By E. EVERETT-GREEN.
38. WHEN THE DREAM IS PAST. By EVA JAMESON.
39. THAT AGGRAVATING SCHOOL-GIRL. By GRACE STEBBING.
40. ALISON'S ORDEAL. By ADELINE SERGEANT.
41. THE CLOISTER AND THE HEARTH. By CHAS. READE.
42. THE STORY OF A MOTHER. By JANE H. FINDLATER.
43. A UNION OF HEARTS. By KATHARINE TYNAN.
44. THE WORK OF OLIVER BYRD. By ADELINE SERGEANT.
45. POOR SONS OF A DAY. By ALLAN M'AULAY.
46. THE WITCH MAID. By L. T. MEADE.
47. ROMOLA. By GEORGE ELIOT.
48. GRIMM'S FAIRY TALES.
49. HANS ANDERSEN'S FAIRY TALES.
50. WESTMINSTER ABBEY. By VIOLET BROOKE-HUNT.
51. IN THE FLOWER OF HER YOUTH. By L. T. MEADE.
52. HEREWARD THE WAKE. By CHAS. KINGSLEY.
53. THE RED CAP OF LIBERTY. By L. T. MEADE.
54. A PLUCKY SCHOOLGIRL. By DOROTHEA MOORE.
55. DAISY PLAINS. By SUSAN WARNER.
56. MY LADY BELLAMY. By DOROTHEA MOORE.
57. KITTY AUBREY. By KATHARINE TYNAN.

The Schoolgirl Series

A selected list of Stories for Girls by well-known Authors. The Books are bound in dainty fashion with a full-coloured ink design. Crown 8vo, 1s. 6d.

1. THE ROSES OF RINGWOOD. By Mrs. MARSHALL.
2. REX AND REGINA. By Mrs. MARSHALL.
3. DULCIBEL'S DAY-DREAM. By Mrs. MARSHALL.
4. THE DALRYMPLES. By AGNES GIBERNE.
5. "LEAST SAID, SOONEST MENDED." By AGNES GIBERNE.
6. NUMBER THREE WINIFRED PLACE. By AGNES GIBERNE.
7. READY, AYE READY! By AGNES GIBERNE.
8. CROSS CORNERS. By ANNA WARNER.
9. MISTRESS MATCHETT'S MISTAKE. By Mrs. MARSHALL.
10. ONE LITTLE VEIN OF DROSS. By RUTH LAMB.
11. CRANFORD. By Mrs. GASKELL.
12. OLD CRUSTY'S NIECE. By J. JACKSON WRAY.
14. GOOD LUCK. By L. T. MEADE.
15. THAT AGGRAVATING SCHOOLGIRL. By GRACE STEBBING.
16. LADY TEMPLE'S GRANDCHILDREN. By Miss EVERETT. GREEN.
17. WHAT KATY DID. By SUSAN COOLIDGE.
18. BESSIE HARRINGTON'S VENTURE. By JULIA MATHEWS.
19. THE HOME AT GREYLOCK. By Mrs. PRENTISS.
20. CISSY'S TROUBLES. By "DARLEY DALE."
21. THE GRIM HOUSE. By Mrs. MOLESWORTH.
22. ROMOLA. By GEORGE ELIOT.
23. ONLY SUSAN. By Mrs. MARSHALL.
24. THE CHILDREN'S PILGRIMAGE. By L. T. MEADE.
25. OLIVER TWIST. By CHAS. DICKENS.
26. GRIMM'S FAIRY TALES.
27. "BROWN." By DOROTHEA MOORE.
28. SWEETBRIAR. By AGNES GIBERNE.
29. GERALD AND DOLLY. By D'ESTERRE.

The Schoolgirl Series—continued

30. HANS ANDERSEN'S FAIRY TALES.
31. BESSIE AT SCHOOL. By JOANNA H. MATHEWS.
32. BESSIE AT THE SEASIDE. By JOANNA H. MATHEWS.
33. JANE EYRE. By CHARLOTTE BRONTË.
34. "ZACK." By J. H. FINDLATER.
35. A UNION OF HEARTS. By KATHARINE TYNAN.
36. AUNT JANE'S HERO. By E. PRENTISS.
37. HEATHER AND HAREBELL. By Mrs. MARSHALL.
38. STELLAFONT ABBEY. By Mrs. MARSHALL.
39. THRO' SHADOW TO SUNSHINE. By E. E. HORNIBROOK.
40. THE THREE LITTLE SPADES. By A. B. WARNER.
41. BESSIE AND HER FRIENDS. By JOANNA H. MATHEWS.
42. BESSIE ON THE MOUNTAINS. By JOANNA H. MATHEWS.
43. BESSIE ON HER TRAVELS. By JOANNA H. MATHEWS.
44. MAGGIE AND BESSIE. By JOANNA H. MATHEWS.
45. A PLUCKY SCHOOLGIRL. By DOROTHEA MOORE.
46. OUGHTS AND CROSSES. By DARLEY DALE.

The Select Series

The Series is strongly recommended; the Authors bear well-known names; the books are well bound; the excellence and quantity of the illustrations are a noticeable feature. Crown 8vo, 2s. 6d.

1. FROISSART IN BRITAIN. By HENRY NEWBOLT.
2. F. G. TAIT: A LIFE RECORD. By J. L. LOW.
3. LORD ROBERTS: A LIFE FOR BOYS. By VIOLET BROOKE-HUNT.
4. THE CHILDHOOD OF QUEEN VICTORIA. By Mrs. GERALD GURNEY.
5. THE CATHEDRAL CITIES OF ENGLAND. By Mrs. MARSHALL.
6. TUDOR QUEENS AND PRINCESSES. By SARAH TYTLER.
7. THE STORY OF WESTMINSTER ABBEY. By VIOLET BROOKE-HUNT.
8. IN SHAKSPERE'S ENGLAND. By Mrs. F. S. BOAS.
9. WITH MILTON AND THE CAVALIERS. By F. S. BOAS.

The Whitehall Library

Printed on Antique Cream-laid Paper. Crown 8vo, bound in Green and Gold. Price 1s. 6d. each.

1. THE LAST DAYS OF POMPEII. By Lord Lytton.

2. JANE EYRE. By Charlotte Brontë.

3. HYPATIA. By Charles Kingsley.

4. IVANHOE. By Sir Walter Scott.

5. CRANFORD. By Mrs. Gaskell.

7. THE LAST OF THE BARONS. By Lord Lytton.

8. THE PIRATE. By Sir Walter Scott.

9. HENRY ESMOND. By W. M. Thackeray.

10. OLD MORTALITY. By Sir Walter Scott.

13. THE CAXTONS. By Lord Lytton.

14. THE ARABIAN NIGHTS' ENTERTAINMENTS.

The Sunshine Series

Books for Young People. In attractive Cloth Binding. Crown 8vo. Illustrated. 1s. 6d.

OLIVER'S OLD PICTURES. By Mrs. MARSHALL.

HIDDEN HOMES. By M. A. PAUL RIPLEY.

SIR VALENTINE'S VICTORY. By Mrs. MARSHALL.

ST. MARTIN'S SUMMER. By ROSE PORTER.

MRS. LESTER'S GIRLS. By the Author of "Miss Marston's Girls."

THE OLDER BROTHER. By PANSY.

A VANISHED HAND. By SARAH DOUDNEY.

TIME TRIES. By Mrs. MARSHALL.

IN THE DAYS OF BRUCE. By GRACE AGUILAR.

THE PINK OF PERFECTION. By Mrs. MARSHALL.

MORAG: A Tale of Highland Life. By Mrs. MILNE RAE.

THE STORY OF OUR ENGLISH BIBLE. By Mrs. BAYLY.

LITTLE BRICKS. By "DARLEY DALE."

The Golden Silence Series

Stories for Children, by Miss GIBERNE, Mrs. MARSHALL, J. JACKSON WRAY, and others. With Illustrations. Attractively bound in cloth. Small crown 8vo. 1s. each.

MICHAEL'S TREASURES. By Mrs. MARSHALL.
MR. RUTHERFORD'S CHILDREN. By SUSAN WARNER.
EFFIE'S FRIENDS; or, Chronicles of the Woods and Shore.
MY LADY BOUNTIFUL. By Mrs. MARSHALL.
THREE PATHS IN LIFE. By E. BARLEE.
GRAN. By E. A. B. D.
THREE TIMES THREE. By PANSY.
PAT'S INHERITANCE. By Mrs. MARSHALL.
THE BRIDE'S HOME. By Mrs. MARSHALL.
SOME COMMON INSECTS. By EMILY DIBDIN.
MY GRANDMOTHER'S PICTURES. By Mrs. MARSHALL.
HIGH AND LOWLY. By ELLEN L. DAVIS.
PETER PENGELLY; or, True as the Clock. By Rev. J. JACKSON WRAY.
A BOY'S WILL. By ELLEN DAVIS.
THREE LITTLE BROTHERS. By Mrs. MARSHALL.
WHEN I WAS YOUNG. By Mrs. MARSHALL.
GOLDEN SILENCE. By Mrs. MARSHALL.
LETTICE LAWSON'S LEGACY. By Mrs. MARSHALL.
SIR BENJAMIN'S BOUNTY. By Mrs. MARSHALL.
MASTER MARTIN. By Mrs. MARSHALL.
KITTEN PILGRIMS. By R. M. BALLANTYNE.
GEOFFREY HALLAM; or, The Clerk of the Parish. By J. JACKSON WRAY.
"A SONG OF SIXPENCE" FOR THE BAIRNS. By J. JACKSON WRAY.
OLD UMBRELLAS. By AGNES GIBERNE.

LONDON: JAMES NISBET & CO., LTD.
22 BERNERS STREET, W.